Qadianism

A CRITICAL STUDY

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By

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PREFACE

In the name of Allah, the Benevolent, the Merciful

Towards the end of December, 1957, and in the beginning of January, 1958, an International Islamic Colloquium was held in Lahore under the auspices of the Punjab University in which a large number of distinguished and noted scholars of the Muslim world and Western countries took part. Quite a few outstanding *ʿulama* representing Middle Eastern countries were there. Despite having received an invitation to participate the writer was unable to reach Lahore until after the colloquium had ended. The points that had been raised during the colloquium continued to be debated by many people.

The scholars who had come from Egypt, Syria and Iraq to participate in the conference showed considerable keenness to collect correct information about the fundamental beliefs and doctrines of Qādiānism, the well-known religious movement of India and Pakistan. This curiosity on their part was justified and natural. For, it was in this part of the world that Qādiānism was born and developed. Hence, from here alone authentic material and information could be procured. The Pakistani and Indian friends of these guests felt the existence of a serious lacuna : the absence of any book on the subject in present-day Arabic which could be presented to them. It was owing to this feeling that when the writer reached Lahore he was ordered by his spiritual teacher and guide, Hazrat Maulānā ʿAbdul Qādir Raipurī, to write a book on this subject in Arabic.

During his trips to the Middle East and his stay in Egypt and Syria the writer had himself felt the need of such a work, but the subject had failed to capture his imagination. The subject was on the whole, out of tune with his temperament. Despite his repeated efforts the writer did not succeed in forcing himself to study any of Mirzā Ghulām

Ahmad's writings. Hence, when he undertook the task, he had little familiarity with the subject. But the demand had been made from a personage the compliance of whose wish was a matter of deepest spiritual satisfaction, to the writer and this enabled him to devote himself to a thorough study of Qādiānism. Within a few days the room where the writer was staying at Lahore changed into a full fledged library on Qādiānism. The work then started in earnest and for one month the writer remained so deeply immersed in the subject that he lost almost all touch with the outside world and had his mind free for no other subject.

The writer's mental framework being that of a student of history, he launched upon his intellectual journey from the very beginning of the movement surveying every stage in its progress and development. The writer's observations, therefore, moved along the lines through which Qādiānism had passed during its course of development. This approach helped the writer to grasp the real nature of the Qādiāni movement, its gradual evolution, and its motivating factors. This approach uncovered a number of aspects which might have remained hidden otherwise. The writer delved deep into the writings of the founder of this movement, Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad Qādiānī and it is through this first hand source that he has tried to arrive at unprejudiced conclusions, trying to maintain the detachment of a historian in respect of the message, the movement, and the practical achievements of Qādiānism. The result of this study has been published in the form of *al-Qādiyānī wa al-Qādiyāniyah* in Arabic.

After the book had been prepared Hazrat Maulāna ʿAbdul Qādir ordered its translation into Urdu. Since actual excerpts in Urdu were required for the Urdu edition, an entire library of books available only in Lahore was required once again. Another trip was made, after which this book was rendered into Urdu. This Urdu edition could better be regarded as an independent work because a number of valuable additions and modifications have been made during the process of its

preparation.

For some time literature on controversial religious subjects has had a peculiar language and style, so much so that this language and style have come to be regarded as part and parcel of religious writings. This writer has not considered himself bound by this polemical tradition. This book has been written with historical objectivity rather than the bigoted zeal of a debater. This will perhaps disappoint those who have been used to polemical writings. For this the writer offers no apology. The class of people for whom it has been written and the purpose which actuated its writing did not warrant any other style of expression.

The writer thanks all those friends and well-wishers who have been a source of guidance in the study of the subject, who provided him with the material needed for writing this book and for facilitating the completion of the work. If this book serves Islam in any way, all such people share its reward.

The writer wishes to impress on his readers one thing: wisdom requires that a person should refrain from risking even as trivial a thing as one's monetary savings, and one should be careful in choosing the people to whom these should be entrusted. If wisdom demands such precaution in worldly affairs, it should not be difficult to guess what a tremendous amount of precaution should be exercised in the matter of faith on which depends a person's salvation and his felicity in the eternal life of the Hereafter. It is evident that in such a matter one should exercise extreme precaution; one should try to use one's discretion to the utmost, and to divest oneself of all emotional predilections, worldly attachments and material interests. This book, through its authentic and systematically arranged information obtained from the statements and writings of the founder of Qādiānism himself and through authentic historical information about the movement, can prove of help to many a person to arrive at an intelligent appreciation of Qādiānism.

11, Rabi al-Awwal, 1378 S. ABUL HASAN ALI NADWI

PART I

The Historical Background of the Rise of Qadianism

1

Muslim India in the Nineteenth Century

The nineteenth century is a period of unique importance in modern history. It is the century in which intellectual unrest and various kinds of conflicts and tensions found in the Muslim world reached their climax. India was one of the main centres of this unrest and tension. Here the conflicts and tensions between the Western and the Eastern cultures, between the old and the new systems of education, in fact, between the old and the new world-views, and between Islam and Christianity were mounting. The forces concerned were locked in a fierce struggle for survival.

The movement began at a time when the well-known struggle of 1857 for the country's independence had been suppressed. This had shocked the Muslims to the core; their hearts were bleeding, and their minds paralysed. They were confronted with the danger of double enslavement; political as well as cultural. On the one hand, the victorious power, the British, had launched upon a vigorous campaign to spread a new culture and civilization in India. On the other hand, the Christian missionaries were scattered all over India bent upon active proselytisation. To be able to shake the confidence of Muslims in their own beliefs and to make them skeptical as to the bases of the Islamic *Shari*ʿ*ah*, even though they might not be converted to Christianity, was deemed by them an important enough achievement. The new generations of Muslims, which had not been thoroughly grounded in Islam, were their main target. The schools and colleges which were introduced along the foreign pattern were the main fields of their activity directed

at spreading intellectual confusion. The efforts were not altogether unsuccessful and even incidents of conversion to Christianity began to take place in India. But the main danger of that period was not apostasy (in the sense of ostensible conversion from Islam to Christianity), but skepticism and atheism. Religious debates between Muslim *'ulama* and Christian missionaries took place frequently, leading in general to the victory of the *'ulama* of Islam. This established the intellectual superiority and greater vitality of Islam as against Christianity. Nevertheless, intellectual unrest, skepticism, and weakness of faith grew apace.

This was one aspect of the situation: the situation *vis-ā-vis* the external menace. Looked at internally, the situation was even worse. Mutual disagreements between Muslim sects had assumed frightful proportions. Each sect was busy denouncing the other. Sectarian polemics were the order of the day, leading often to violent clashes, even to bloodshed, to litigation over controversial sectarian issues. The whole of India was in the grip of what might be termed a sectarian civil war. This too had given birth to mental confusion and created breaches in the Muslim society and disgust in the people and had considerably damaged the prestige of the Muslim *'ulama* and of Islam.

On the other hand, immature *sūfis* and ignorant pretenders of spiritual excellence had reduced the *Sūfi* orders to a plaything. They gave wide publicity to their trance-utterances and inspired pronouncements. One found people everywhere making overly extravagant claims and going about proclaiming their ability to perform astounding miracles and to receive messages from on High. The result of all this was that the Muslim masses had developed an uncommon relish for things esoteric, for miracles, for supernatural performances, for inspired dreams and prophesies. The more a person had to offer people by way of these things, the greater was his popularity. Such people used to become the centre of popular veneration. Hypocritical *dervishes* and cunning traders of religion took full advantage of the situation. People had

developed such a liking for esoterics that they were readily prepared to accept every new fantasy, to support every new movement and to believe in every esoteric claim however baseless and imaginary. Muslims were generally in the grip of frustration and had fallen prey to defeatism. The failure of the struggle of 1857 and of a number of other recent religious and militant movements was fresh in their memory. Many of them had despaired, therefore, of bringing about any change and reform through normal processes and a large number of people had begun to await the advent of some charismatic personality, some divinely appointed leader. At places one heard that at the turn of the century the Promised Messiah would make his appearance. In religious gatherings people commonly referred to the numerous forms of misguidance and evil which were to appear on the eve of the Doomsday. Prophesies and esoteric statements such as those of Shāh Niʿamat Ullāh Kāshmīrī helped people to forget the bitterness of the current situation and strengthened their morale. Dreams, prophesies and other esoteric pronouncements had magnetic appeal and kept their spirits high.

The province of Punjab, in particular, was the centre of mental confusion and unrest, superstitions and religious ignorance. This province had suffered for eighty years under the yoke of the Sikh Raj, an overbearing military tyranny. During this period the religious belief and devotion of Muslims had weakened considerably. True Islamic education had been almost non-existent for long. The foundations of Islamic life and Islamic society had been shaken. Their minds were seriously in the grip of confusion and perplexity. In brief, to borrow the words of Iqbal:

> The Khālsa (Sikhs) took away both the Qurʾān and the sword,
> In their realm, Islam was just dead.

This situation had paved the ground in the Punjab for the rise of a new religious movement based on novel interpretations and esoteric doctrines. The temperament of a good number of

people of the region where this movement arose has been portrayed by Iqbal in these words:

In religion, he is fond of the latest,
He stays not for long at a place; he keeps on moving;
In learning and research he does not participate,
But to the game of Mentors and Disciples, he readily succumbs;
If the trap of explanation anyone lays,
He walks into it quickly from the branch of his nest.

It was towards the end of the nineteenth century that Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad appeared on the scene with his unique message and movement. For the spread of his message and for the fulfilment of his ambitions Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad found a fertile ground and a congenial period of time. He had numerous factors to his advantage—the general unrest in the minds of people, the exotic-loving temperament of the people, the general despair with regard to the efficacy of moderate and normal means of reform and revolution, the decline in the prestige of and confidence in the *ʿulama*, the popularity of religious debates which had vulgarised the religious curiosities and propensities of the people and made them, to a large extent, free-thinkers. Furthermore, the British rulers (who had had a bitter experience with Mujāhidīn movement and felt, therefore, considerable consternation for the spirit of *jihād* and the religious enthusiasm of Muslims), warmly welcomed this new religious movement which pledged loyalty to the British government and even made this loyalty an article of faith, and whose founder had had a long and close association with the government. All these factors provided the congenial atmosphere in which Qādiānism came into existence, won converts and developed into an independent sect and religion.

2

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani[1]

Family Background

Genealogically Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad belonged to the Barlās branch of the Moghuls.[2] But after some time he came to know by means of 'inspiration' that he was, in fact, of Persian origin. To quote his own words:

> "The revelation (*ilhām*) about me is that : Were it that faith was hanging from the Pleiades it would still have been seized by the man from Persia.[3] And then, there is also a third revelation about me : Verily, those who disbelieved the man from Persia disproved their religions. God is thankful for his endeavour. All these 'revelations' show that our forefathers were Persian. And the truth is what Allah has made manifest."[4]

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1 This chapter purporting to lay down the biographical outlines of the founder's life is based chiefly on the statements and writings of the Mirzā himself, supplemented by the work of his son Mirzā Bashīr Ahmed, *Sīrat al-Mahdī* and other standard works of the Qādiānis.

2 Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad, *Kitāb al-Bariyah*, p. 134 n.

3. This tradition occurs in the *Sihāh* with a little variation of words. In some reports there occurs the phrase '*Rijal Min Faras*' (men from Persia) instead of *Rajul* (a man). The *'ulama* and the *muhaddithīn* interpret this *hadīth* to refer to Salmān al-Fārisi and other *'ulama* and holy men of Persia famous for their devotion and service to the cause of faith including the Imām Abū Hanīfa, who was also of Persian origin.

4. *Kitāb al-Bariyah*, p. 135 n.

In one of his works he writes:

"It should be remembered that apparently the family of this humble one is that of the Moghuls. No record has been seen in the history of our family, showing that the family was Persian. What has been seen in certain records is that some of our grandmothers were of noble and noted Sayyid families. Now it has come to be known through the word of God that ours is a Persian family. We believe in this with all our conviction since the reality in respect of genealogies is known to none the way it is known to Allah, the Exalted. It is His knowledge alone which is true and sure and that of all others, doubtful and conjectural."[5]

Mirzā Gul Mohammad, the great grandfather of Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad owned considerable property. In Punjab he had a good-sized estate. Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad had mentioned in detail the aristocratic pomp and splendour of this ancestor of his, his habit to feed a large number of people at his table, and his religious influence.[6]

After his death, his estate declined and the Sikhs confiscated the villages of that estate. This decline continued to such an extent that no other land remained in the ownership of his grandfather, Mirzā ʿAtā Mohammad, except Qādiān. Later on, the Sikhs occupied even that and drove the Mirzā family out of Qādiān. During the last years of Ranjit Singh's rule Mirzā Ghulām Murtaza, the father of the Mirzā, returned to Qādiān and the Mirzā later received five villages out of the landed property of his father.[7]

The Mirzā's family maintained very loyal and cordial relations with the recently established British power in the Punjab. Several members of the family had shown great enthusiasm in consolidating the new government and had come to its rescue on several critical occasions. To cite the words of

5. *Arbaʿīn*, Vol. II, p. 17 n.
6. *Kitāb al-Bariyah*, pp. 136-42 n.
7. Ibid, pp. 142-44 n.

the Mirzā himself:

"I come from a family which is out and out loyal to this government. My father, Murtaza, who was considered its well-wisher, used to be granted a chair in the Governor's Durbar and has been mentioned by Mr. Griffin in his History of the Princes of Punjab. In 1857 he helped the British Government beyond his power, that is, he procured cavaliers and horses right during the time of Mutiny. He was considered by the Government to be its loyal supporter and well-wisher. A number of testimonials of appreciation received by him from the officers have unfortunately been lost: Copies of three of them, however, which had been published a long time ago, are reproduced on the margin. Then, after the death of my grandfather, my elder brother Mirzā Ghulām Qādir continually occupied himself with service to the Government and when the evil-doers encountered the forces of the British Government on the highway of Tammun, he participated in the battle on the side of the British Government."[8]

Birth, Education, Upbringing

The Mirzā was born during the last phase of the Sikh rule in the year 1839 or 1840 at Qādiān in Gurdāspūr District.[9] His own writings show that at the time of the struggle of Independence in 1857, he was sixteen or seventeen years old.[10]

The Mirzā received his education up to the Middle Class

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8. *Ishtihār Wājib al-Izhār*, September 20, 1897 pp. 3-6 appended with *Kitāb al-Bariyah*.

9. & 10. *Kitāb al-Bariyah*, p. 146, n. Mirza Bashīruddin Mahmood in his Address to the British Crown Prince in 1922, has mentioned the year of his birth to be 1837 (p. 35). According to this, in 1857, his age would be 21. This alteration seems to have been made in order to vindicate the Mirza's prophecy which has been mentioned by him as a Divine inspiration in the following words: "We shall cause you to live a good life for eighty years or close to that" (vide *Arbaʿīn*, Vol. III, p. 39).

at home. He studied books on Grammar, Logic and Philosophy under the guidance of Maulavi Fazl-i-Ilāhī, Maulavi Fazl-i-Ahmad and Maulavi Gul ʿAlī Shāh. He studied Medicine from his father who was an experienced physician. During his student life, the Mirzā was very studious. To quote his own words:

> "During those days I was so thoroughly engrossed in books as if I was not present in the world. My father used to instruct me repeatedly to curtail my reading, for, out of sympathy for me he feared that this might affect my health."

This, however, did not continue for long. Under the insistent pressure of his father, the Mirzā had to engage himself in the endeavour to get back his ancestral landed property which subsequently led to litigation in law courts. He writes:

> "I feel sorry that a lot of my valuable time was spent in these squabbles and at the same time my respected father made me supervise the affair of landlordship. I was not a man of this nature and temperament."[11]

The Mirzā later took employment with the Deputy Commissioner of Sialkot for a small salary. He remained for four years in this service, that is, from 1864 to 1868.[12] During this period he also read one or two books of English.[13] Moreover, he also took the examination of Mukhtar but flopped.[14] In 1868 he resigned this job and came to Qādiān and began to look after his landed property. But most of his time was spent on reflecting on the Holy Qurʾān and studying works of *Tafsīr* and Traditions.[15]

Moral Disposition

From his very childhood, the Mirzā was very simple. He

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11. *Kitāb al-Bariyah* p. 151.
12. *Sīrat al-Mahdī*, Vol. I., p. 44.
13. *Ibid.* p. 155.
14. *Ibid* p. 156
15. *Kitāb al-Bariyah*, p. 155 n.

was unaware of wordly matters and appeared to be a little absent-minded. He did not even know how to wind a watch.[16] When he had to know time, he took out the watch from his pocket and began to count, starting from one. And even then, while he counted with his finger he also kept on counting the figures aloud lest he should forget.[17] He could not just look at the watch and find out what time it was. Due to absent-mindedness, it was difficult for him to differentiate between the shoes of the left and the right feet. Mirzā Bashīr Ahmad writes:

> "Once some one brought for him gurgabi (a kind of shoes used in Punjab). He put them on, but could not distinguish between the right and the left. Often he used to wear them on the wrong feet, and then feel uncomfortable. Sometimes when he would be hurt by the use of the wrong shoe, he would get irritated and say that nothing of those people was good. Mother said that she had inscribed signs indicating right and left on the shoes for the sake of his convenience and yet he used to put the shoes on the wrong feet. Hence she later removed the signs."[18]

Due to very frequent micturition the Mirzā used to keep earthen-marbles[19] in his pockets. He also carried lumps of *gur*[20] for he was excessively fond of sweets.[21]

Mirzā's Physical Health

In his youth, the Mirzā was so afflicted with hysteria that sometimes he used to fall down unconscious as a result of hysteric fits.[22] The Mirzā used to interpret these fits variously

16. Qāzī Mohammad Zuhūruddīn Qādiyānī's article, *Yad-i-Ayyām*-Journal *al-Hakam*, 21 May, 1934.
17. *Sīrat al-Mahdī*, Vol. I, p. 180.
18. *Sīrat al-Mahdī*, Vol. I. p. 67.
19. Used after urination by Muslims for cleaning purposes, usually, when water is not available.
20. An unrefined kind of sugar used in India.
21. *Burāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. I, p. 67.
22. *Sirat al-Mahdi*, Vol, I, p. 17.

as hysteric and melancholia. He also suffered from diabetes and copious urination. Mentioning at one place that 'I am a permanently sick person,' he adds:

> "Headache and giddiness and insomnia and palpitation of the heart come by fits and the lingering ailment in the lower part of my body is that of diabetes. Often I urinate up to a hundred times during the day or night. And all the other disorders of debility and exhaustion which are the natural results of such excessive urination have also fallen to my lot."[23]

In his youth, the Mirzā engaged himself in vigorous spiritual exercises and courses of rigid self-discipline. He also fasted continuously for long periods of time. In one of his long spells of spiritual exertion, he fasted cxntinuously for six months.[24] In 1886, he passed another period of exclusive worship and prayer at Hoshiarpur.[25] Later on, due to ill health and debility, he had to give these up. On March 31, 1891 he wrote to Nūruddīn: "Now my health can no longer bear the rigours of supererogatory devotion and even a little bit of severe devotion and meditation or contemplation causes illness."[26]

Economic Condition

The Mirzā began his life in ordinary circumstances: a life of hardship and poverty. But as his mission spread and he became the spiritual head of a prosperous sect, he grew prosperous and began to lead a comfortable life. He, too, was conscious of this change in his state: the ostensible difference between his earlier and later periods of life. In 1907 he wrote:

> "Our living and our well-being had depended solely on the meagre income of our father. Among outsiders, none knew me. I was an unknown person, living in the

23. Appendix to *Arbaʿīn*, pp. 3/4 and p. 4 (abbreviated).
24. *Sirat al-Mahdi*, Vol. I, p. 76.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
26. *Makūbāt-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. V, No. 2, p. 103.

desolate village of Qādiān, lying in a corner of anonymity. Then, God, according to His prophecy, turned a whole world towards me and helped us by such continuous victories that I have no words to express my thanks. Considering my own position, I did not hope to receive even ten rupees a month. But the Exalted Allah, who raises the poor from dust and brings the arrogant down to the earth, helped me to such an extent that up till now I have received about three hundred thousand rupees or, may be, even more."[27]

In the footnote, he adds:

"Although thousands of rupees have come by means of money orders, yet more have been passed on to me directly by sincere friends as gifts, or in the shape of currency notes enclosed with letters. Some sincere people have sent currency notes or gold anonymously and I do not even know what their names are."[28]

Marriage and Children

The Mirzā's first marriage took place in 1852 or 1853 with one of his own relatives.[29] This wife gave birth to two sons: Mirzā Sultān Ahmad and Mirzā Fazal Ahmad. In 1891, he divorced the lady. In 1884 he took another wife, the daughter of Nawab Nasīr of Delhi.[30] The rest of the offsprings of the Mirzā were all from this wife. Three sons were born from her: Mirzā Bashīruddīn Mahmood, Mirzā Bashīr Ahmad (author of Sīrat al-Mahdī) and Mirzā Sharīf Ahmad.

Death

When in 1891 the Mirzā declared that he was the Promised

27. *Haqiqat al-Wahy*, p. 211.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 211, n.
29. *Sirat al-Mehdi*, Vol. II, p. 150.
30. *Sirat al-Mahdi*, Vol. II, p. 151.

Messiah,[31] and later on in 1910, that he was a prophet of God,[32] the Muslim *'ulama* began to refute and oppose him. Among those prominent in opposing him was Maulānā Sanā'ullah Amritsari, the editor of *Ahl-i-Hadith*. On April 5, 1907, Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad issued an announcement in which, while addressing the said Maulānā, he wrote :

> "If I am such a big liar and impostor as you portray me in each issue of your magazine, then I will die in your life-time, for I know that the life-period of a mischief-maker and liar is not very long and ultimately he dies an unsuccessful man, during the life of his greatest enemies and in a state of humiliation and grief. And if I am not a liar and impostor and have been honoured by God's communication and address to me, and if I am the Promised Messiah, then I hope that with the grace of God and in accordance with God's practice you will not escape the punishment of the rejectors (of Truth). Thus, if that punishment which is not in man's but in God's hand, that is, fatal diseases like plague and cholera, do not afflict you during my life-time,[33] then I am not from God."[34]

One year after the publication of this announcement, on May 25, 1908 the Mirzā fell ill, being afflicted with diarrhoea at Lahore. Along with loose motions, he also had vomiting. He was put under treatment at once, but weakness increased and his condition became critical. The next day, on May 26, he breathed his last in the forenoon. About his death his father-in-law Mir Nāsir Nawāb has stated :

> "The night on which Hazrat Mirzā Sāhib fell ill, I was asleep at my place. When he felt very uncomfortable,

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31. *Refer* Part II, Chapter 2.
32. *Refer* Part II, Chapter 3.
33. It would be interesting to note that Maulānā Amritsari died at the age of eighty on March 18, 1948 some forty years after the death of the Mirzā.
34. *Tabligh-i-Risālat*, Vol. X, p. 120.

I was awakened. When I went to Hazrat Sāhib he addressed me and said, 'Mīr Sāhib I am ill with cholera'. After this, in my opinion, he did not speak a clear word till he died the next day after ten o'clock.''[45]

The dead body was carried to Qādiān. On May 27, 1908 the burial took place and Hakīm Nūruddīn became his successor, the first *Khalīfah* of the Qādiānī movement.

35. *Hayāt-i-Nasir*, ed. Shaykh Yaqūb ʿAlī ʿIrfānī.

3

The Qadiani Saint Paul

Hakīm[1] Nūruddīn Bhairawī occupies a position of unique importance in the history of Qādiānism, second only to that of its founder. In fact, some observers are of the view that the said Hakīm was the real brain behind the movement, that the intellectual currents of this movement sprang from his mind.

Birth and Early Education

Hakīm Nūruddīn was born in 1258 A. H. (1841 A. D.) in Bhaira, District Sargodha (Punjab).[2] Thus in 1857 he was 16 years of age, and was younger than the Mirzā by just one or two years. His father, Hāfiz Ghulām Rasūl, was an *imām* in a mosque in Bhaira, and was a Farūqī by lineage.

The Hakīm's early education took place in his home-village. He read the books on *Fiqah* in Punjabi language under the guidance of his mother. Then he went to Lahore. He was taught Persian by Munshī Qāsim Kāshmīrī and learnt calligraphy from Mirzā Imām Dayrawi. But neither of the two attracted him. Both his teachers were Shias. In 1272 A. H. (1855 A. D.) he returned home and remained for some time studying under Miān Hājī Sharfuddīn. It is around this time that he began to learn the Arabic language systematically.

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1. Hakīm means a physician practising the traditional system of Greek-Arabian medicine (Translator).
2. These are based on Akbar Shāh Khān Najībābādī's *Mirqāt al-Yaqīn fī Hayāt Nūruddīn*. Najībābādī was a pupil of the Hakim. These biographical details were related to him by the Hakīm himself at the time when Najībābādī was his student as well as a devout follower.

Under the influence of a bookseller who belonged to the movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, there arose in him the urge to translate the Holy Qur'ān, and he anxiously read *Taqwiyatul Imān* and *Mashāriq-al-Anwār*. A little later, he returned to Lahore and acquired some knowledge of Medicine. While his education was at a very advanced stage, he took employment with the Normal School, Rawalpindi. There he taught Persian and at the same time learned Arithmetic and Geography from another teacher. After passing a tahsil examination, he became headmaster in Pindi Dandān Khān and once more resumed the study of Arabic. After four years, he ceased to remain in service and began to devote all his time to his own studies. For some time, he studied under Maulavī Ahmaduddīn (who was known as Buggīwāle Qāzī Sāhib). Then, his love for knowledge made him travel to several parts of India. In Rampur he resumed his studies : studied *Mishkāt-āl-Māsābīh* under Maulānā Hasan Shāh, *Sharah-i-Wiqāyah* under Maulavī ʿAzīzullah Afghānī, *Usūl* of *āl-Shāshī* and *Māibāzī* under Maulānā Irshād Husain; the *Diwān* of al-Mutanabbī under Maulavī Saʿdullah; *Sadra*, etc., under Maulavī ʿAbd al-ʿAlī, and the higher books on Logic like *Mīr Zāhid Risālah* and *Mīr Zahid Mulla Jalāl*, half-heartedly. At this time, he enthusiastically supported Ismaʿīl Shahīd and sometimes used to speak to his teachers with great boldness. From Rampur he went to Lucknow and began to study medicine under a famous physician, Hakīm ʿAlī Husain. When ʿAlī Husain went to Rampur on invitation from Nawāb Kalb-i-ʿAlī Khān of Rampur Nūruddīn accompanied him. During his stay in Rampur he further studied literature under Muftī Saʿdullah. On the whole he remained with Hakīm ʿAlī Husain for a perioc of two years and then went to Bhopal in order to complete his education in Arabic and to study *Hadīth*. Bhopal, in those days, had become a great centre of learning. The Governmental patronage of knowledge and learning had attracted a good number of scholars. In Bhopal he stayed with and was patronnised by Munshī Jamāluddīn Khān, the Chief Minister. During his stay, Nūruddīn took lessons in *Bukhārī* and *Hidāyah* from

Maulānā ʿAbdul Qayyūm (the son of Maulānā ʿAbdul Hai Burhānwai, who was a *Khalifah* of Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Shahid). From Bhopal he went on a visit to the Holy cities—Mecca and Medina—in order to complete his education and also in order to attain other-worldly felicity.[3]

In Mecca, he studied *Abū Daʾūd* under Shaykh Muhammad Khazrajī, *Sahih Muslim* under Sayyid Husain and began to study *Musallam al-Thubūt* under Maulānā Rahmatullah Kayrānawī, the author of *Izhār al-Haqq*. Sometimes, he had heated discussion with his teachers and showed trends towards non-conformity and exaggerated confidence in the soundness of his own views and intelligence.[4]

At Mecca he finished his study of *Abū Daʾūd* and *Ibn Mājah* under Shaykh Muhammad Khazrajī. In the meantime Shāh ʿAbdul Ghanī Mujaddidī had arrived in Mecca. Later on when Shāh Mujaddidī returned to Medīna, the Hakīm joined him and after taking an oath of allegiance to him remained as his student for six months.

Occupation

After pilgrimage and visit to the Holy places, Nūruddīn returned to his native place, Bhaira and stayed there for some time. During his stay he debated with people as to whether the current customs and usages conformed to the teachings embodied in the collections of *Hadith* which turned some people against him. This led him to realise the ignorance and stagna-

3. An interesting anecdote is related in this connection, which was narrated by Nūruddīn himself. While leaving for the Holy cities, he asked Maulānā ʿAbdul Qayyūm to tender him some advice. He said, "Never become God or Prophet." ʿAbdul Qayyūm explained that by 'not becoming God' what he had meant was that if any of his desires were frustrated, he should not feel greatly dejected, for to be able to do what one likes is the attribute of God alone; by 'not becoming the Prophet' he meant that if people rejected his *fatwās*, he should not deem them to be condemned to hell, for it is the disobedience of the Prophet alone which condemns one to hell (*Mirqāt al-Yaqin*, p. 79).

4. *Mirqāt al-Yaqin* p. 95-97.

tion of the common people and his own superiority and intellectual excellence. He also went to Delhi during the Durbar of Lord Lytton and there met Munshi Jamaluddīn Khān, the Chief Minister of Bhopal, who brought him to Bhopal. After a short stay at Bhopal, Nūruddīn once more went back to Bhaira and started practising medicine there. Soon his reputation as a successful physician spread and he was invited by the Mahārāja of Jammu to serve him as his personal physician. For a considerable period of time he served the ruler of Jammu, Poonch and Kashmir and gained considerable influence there by dint of his ability as a physician, and his eloquence, knowledge and wit. He had become a very close confidant of the Mahārāja and thus quite powerful.

An Ardent Follower of Mirza

There were many similarities of character and temperament between Hakīm Nūruddīn and Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad. It is difficult to say how they came into contact with each other. Their first meeting, however, took place at Qādiān in 1885. When the Mirzā wrote *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiya*, Nūruddīn wrote a book supporting it. His admiration for the Mirzā increased so much so that he took an oath of allegiance at his hands and accepted him as his spiritual guide, his leader, and pledged to follow him. The following letter of Nūruddīn shows the depth of his attachment to the Mirzā.

"My master, my guide, my leader : *Assalām-o-Alaykum wa Rahmat ullah*,

"It is my prayer to be ever present before you and to learn from you all that for which the *Imām* of the age has been made the *Mujaddid*. If it is permitted, I would resign my job and spend day and night in your exalted service; or if it is ordered, I would give up my present engagements and go around the whole world, summoning people towards the true religion and would lay down my life in this cause. I am a martyr in your cause : whatever I have is not mine; it is yours. Respected guide and

mentor, with utmost sincerity I say that if all my wealth and belongings are sacrificed in the cause of religious preaching, I will have achieved my purpose. If the buyers of *Barāhīn* in advance are uneasy at the delay in the publication of the book, please permit me to render the humble service of paying them all their dues from my pocket.

"Respected *pīr* and guide : this worthless one, ashamed of himself, says that if this offer is accepted it would be a pleasure for him. What I mean is that I may be permitted to bear the entire cost of printing *Barāhīn* and that whatever proceeds there might be from its sale, should be spent on your needs. My relationship with you is the same as that of Fārūq (with the Prophet) and I am prepared to sacrifice all in this path. Please pray that the end of my life be like that of *Siddīqs* (the truthful ones)."[5]

Nūruddīn's faith in the Mirzā was very deep indeed. It so happened that when the Mirzā wrote *Fath-i-Islām* and *Tawdīh al-Marām* someone asked Nūruddīn, before he had seen these books, if any other Prophet could come after the Holy Prophet. "No", he replied. "And if someone claims to be a Prophet ?" he was asked. Nūruddīn replied that if someone did claim so, it would be seen whether he was truthful or not ; and that his claim would be accepted if he was truthful. After narrating this incident, Nūruddīn himself adds :

"This was just the case of prophethood. My faith is that even if the Promised Messiah were to proclaim himself to be the bearer of a *Shar'ah* and abrogate the Quranic *Shar'ah*, I will not reject that claim. For, when we have accepted him (i. e. the Mirzā) to be truthful and to have been commissioned by God, then whatever he will say will of necessity be true and we will have to think that the (Quranic) verse in respect of *Khātim al-Nabiyīn* (the last of the Prophets) has a different meaning."[6]

During his association with the Court of Jammu, Nūruddīn

5. *Mirqāt al-Yaqīn fī Hayāt-i-Nūruddīn*, pp. 17-18.
6. *Sīrat al-Mahdī*, pp. 98-99.

wrote *Fasl-ul-Khitāb* in four volumes under the guidance of the Mirzā in which he refuted Christianity. He kept on contributing very magnanimously to the publication of the works of the Mirzā and quite often the Mirzā took large sums of money as loans from him[7] and praised him for his religious enthusiasm, his readiness to help the religious cause and his large-hearted generosity. The famous couplet of the Mirzā about Nūruddīn is:

"How good would it be, were every one in the *Ummat* a Nūruddīn;

That would be so, if the light of faith burnt in the heart of everyone."[8]

For several reasons, particularly the intrigues of the courtiers, the Mahārājā's attitude towards Nūruddīn subsequently changed. In 1893 or 1894, his service with the Mahārāja was terminated and Nūruddīn returned to Bhaira. After a brief stay and practice of medicine there he moved to Qādiān permanently and dedicated his life to supporting the Mirzā and spreading his movement.

Accession to Khilafat

On the Mirzā's death on May 26, 1908, he became his first *Khalīfah*. The followers of the Mirzā paid their allegiance to him and he was proclaimed to be the "*Khalīfah* of the Promised Messiah", and "Nūruddīn the Great." For quite some time Nūruddīn remained hesitant whether he should consider those who did not believe in the Mirzā's prophethood to be unbelievers. Later, he was converted to the view that they were unbelievers.[9] There was some controversy about his nomination as the *Khalīfah*. Some people strongly opposed it. On one such occasion he said:

"I say by God that it is God Himself who had made me the *Khalīfah*. So, who now has the power to snatch from me the robe (literally the covering sheet) of this

7. *Maktūbāt-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. V, *See* Letters to Nūruddīn.
8. *Mirqāt al-Yaqīn*.
9. *See* Mirzā Bashīr Ahmad: *Kalimat al-Fasl*, Chapter VI.

Caliphate? It was the Will of God Himself, and was in the light of His Own wise consideration, to make me your *Imam* and *Khalifah*. You can attribute to me a thousand shortcomings. They, in fact, will be attributable not to me, but to God Himself who appointed me the *Khalifah*."[10]

On another occasion he said:

"God has made me the *Khalifah*. Now, neither can I be dismissed (from Caliphate) by your biddance nor has anyone the power to remove me. If you force me any further, bear in mind that I have at my disposal many Khālid ibn Walids who will punish you as (Khālid bin Walid had punished) the apostates."[11]

Nūruddīn remained the *Khalifah* of the Qādiānī movement for six years. In 1914 he fell from a horse and died on March 13, 1914. A few days before his death, his tongue had ceased to function.[12] He nominated Mirzā Bashīruddīn Mahmood, the eldest son of Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad, to be his successor and *Khalifah*.

Temperament

A study of Nūruddīn's life shows that he possessed a mercurial nature and remained a prey to mental conflicts during the greater period of his life. From the very beginning he had a bent towards "free-thinking". First of all, he freed himself from the bonds of the four Muslim schools of jurisprudence and carried his non-conformism to an extreme. Then he came under the influence of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān's literature and assimilated his way of thinking. This was the time when some elementary knowledge of physical sciences was finding its way to India, and the rationalists among Indian Muslims were becoming deeply impressed by it. Those who had a religious

10. Review of Religions, Qādian, Vol. 14 No 6, p. 234 (cited from Ilyas Barni's Qādiyani Mazhab).
11. *Tashkhiz al-Azhān*, Vol. 9 No. 11 cited by Barni.
12. The Daily *Al-Fadhl*, Qādiān, 23 February, 1932, (cited from *Qādiāni Mazhab*).

inclination attempted to harmonise Quranic teachings with scientific knowledge. If this harmonisation presented any difficulty, they tried to overcome it by offering far-fetched interpretations of Quranic verses and the Quranic terminology. Nūruddīn's teaching of *Tafsīr* was representative of this intellectual trend.[13]

In *Sirat al-Mahdi*, Mirzā Bashīr Ahmad writes:

> "In the beginning Hazrat Nūruddīn, the first *Khalifah*, was deeply under the influence of the way of thinking and the work of Sir Sayyīd. But, subsequently, due to contact with Hazrat Sāhib, this influence gradually wore off."[14]

But a study of his ideas as well as those of his disciples makes it evident that either because of the influence of Sir Sayyid's ideas, or because of his own predilection he remained the same all his life. His mind had been moulded into a rigid frame and his mental attitudes had become too hardened to change.

A more careful study of his life reveals that along with his enlightenment and rationalism, there was a strong superstitious element in his personality. Despite all his non-conformism and rationalism he attached great importance to 'dreams' and 'inspirations'. It has been observed that not infrequently people who stand for intellectual freedom, in fact, for intellectual revolt, also have an inherent trait of superstitiousness. Their frame of mind is basically apologetic. Such people keep on raising the banner of revolt all their lives against certain institutions or personalities, but, at the same time, when they submit before someone, their power of free-thinking and independent judgement is totally paralysed. Man's life is a strange combination of action and reaction; and his personality a complex of divergent, even mutually conflicting elements. Nothing is more difficult to understand and analyse than the driving urges of a man's personality.

13. A good example of his way of thinking is found in the *Tafsīr* of his pupil Maulavī Muhammad ʿAlī Lahori (His *Tafsir* is found in English as well as Urdu).

14. *Sirat al-Mahdi*, Vol. I, p. 159.

PART II

On the Road to Prophethood

1

Mirza as Champion of Islam

We have covered so far a part of the life of Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad, his life in his township in district Gurdāspūr where we saw him immersed in the study of religious books. His works published after 1880 indicate that the main subjects of his study were different religions, particularly Christianity and Indian religions such as Sanātan Dharma and Ārya Samāj.

This period is known for the religious polemics. The educated people of the time had a relish for religious debates and controversies. We have already seen that Christian missionaries were busy propagating Christianity and refuting Islam. The British Government, which was officially the defender of the Christian Faith, patronised these activities, considering India a gift of Jesus Christ. On the other hand were the preachers of the Ārya Samāj movement who were enthusiastically trying to undermine Islam. The British who were aware of the dangerous possibility of inter-communal concord in India, a manifestation of which was the struggle for Indian Independence of 1857, found it expedient to encourage religious controversies. The British political interest was served by these controversies in so far as they led to mutual hatred, intellectual bewilderment and moral chaos in the country so that the religious communities of India might be disposed at least to tolerate a government which sought to protect all of them and under whose shadow all could carry on their holy debates. In such an atmosphere, anyone why rose to defend Islam and falsify other religions naturally attracted the attention of all Muslims.

The ambitious and far-sighted Mirzā chose this field for his

adventures. He undertook to produce a voluminous work to demonstrate, on the one hand, the truth of Islam, the Divine origin of the Qur'ān, and the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah by rational arguments, and to refute Christianity, Sanātan Dharma, Arya Samāj and Brahmo Samāj etc., on the other hand. He named this book *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*.

The Barāhīn and the Mirzā's Challenge

The writing of *Barāhīn* started in 1879.[1] The author undertook to put forward one hundred arguments in support of Islam. In this undertaking the Mirzā also had correspondence with other learned people whom he requested to communicate to him their views in order to help him in this venture. Those who complied with his request included Maulavī Chirāgh ʿAlī who was a noted colleague of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān. The Mirzā included some of his articles and researches in his work. At long last this work, which was anxiously awaited by hundreds of people, did break into print in four volumes. Along with this book, its author also published an announcement in Urdu and English and sent it to rulers and ministers of States, to Christian clergymen and to Hindu pandits. In this book the Mirzā announced for the first time that he had been appointed by God to demonstrate the truth of Islam and that he was prepared to satisfy the followers of other religions about his religion. The announcement categorically stated:

> "This humble slave (the author of *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*) has been appointed by the Glorious Almighty to strive for the reform of God's creatures and to show to the ignorant the straight path (which leads to true salvation and by following which the light of heavenly existence and of Divine pleasure and graciousness can be experienced even in this world) in the manner of the Israelite Prophet of Nazareth (Messiah) with utmost humility and self-denial, self-abasement and gentleness. It is for this purpose that

1. *Sirat al-Mahdī*, Vol. II, p. 157.

Barāhin-i-Ahmadiyah has been written, of which thirty-seven parts have been published. Its summary is to be found in the announcement enclosed with this letter. But since the publication of the whole book would require a long time, it has been decided that this letter along with the English announcement should be published and one copy of each sent to the honourable priests of Punjab, India and England and other countries wherever possible."[2]

The Mirzā challenged the world to come forward with any book parallel to this one, and invited the representatives of other religions to prove the truth of their religions by the same or even lesser number of arguments than he had put forward. He wrote:

"I, the author of this book, *Barāhin-i-Ahmadiyah*, make this announcement with the promise to make a reward of 10,000 rupees to the followers of all faiths and religions who deny the truth of the Glorious Qur'ān and the Prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad Mustafa (God's benediction and salutation be on him) and in support of it I commit myself to a formal legal undertaking and a *Shar'i* pledge that if any of these deniers can show that their scriptures have as many and as sound arguments as found in the Holy Qur'ān and which we have mentioned herein to demonstrate the truth of the Glorious Message and the veracity of the Apostleship of the *Khātim-al-Ambiya* (God's benediction and salutation be upon him) which have been derived from the Sacred Book (Qur'ān) itself; or if they cannot come forward with an equal number of arguments, then half, or a third, or a fourth, or fifth of the number of our arguments; or if they find that impossible, then at least to refute our arguments one by one—then, in either of these cases, provided three authors accepted by both the parties, unanimously express the view that the condition has been fulfilled in the manner it should have been fulfilled—the announcer (of this announcement) shall hand over to such a respondent without an excuse or hesti-

2. Supplement to *Barāhin-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. I by M'erājuddīn 'Umar, p. 82

tation the occupancy and ownership of his property valued at Rs. 10,000."[3]

The Mirzā called upon the Muslims to make monetary contributions to this great service which he wanted to render to the cause of Islam and to participate in it generously.[4] It seems that the response of Muslims to this call was not as enthusiastic as the Mirzā had expected. In the later volumes of *Barāhin* he has mourned their lack of enthusiasm.[5]

The announcements which formed the preface of the book are significant. In them we find some indications of the driving forces of the Mirzā's personality. In them we notice his habit of boastfulness and self-adulation and his confidence in 'heavenly signs' as means of establishing his claims and persuading people. Along with all that, the statements unmistakably smack of his commercial mentality.

Preaching and Politics

In the third and fourth volumes of *Barāhin-i-Ahmadiyah*, the Mirzā openly praised the British government and enumerated at length its acts of benevolence towards Muslims in the sections entitled, 'An Important Appeal to Islamic Associations: The Precarious Condition of Muslims and the English Government.' In this appeal he urged all Islamic Associations to prepare a joint memorandum and send it to the government with signatures from all prominent Muslims. He also reiterated the services rendered by his family to the British and stressed the impermissibility of *jihād*.

Thus we find that even the first work of the Mirzā was not free from panegyrics to the British government, or from political admonitions to the Muslims to remain loyal to the British.

The Magnum Opus

The Mirzā worked on this book from 1880 to 1884. After

3. *Barāhin-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. I, pp. 17-22.
4. *See* Iltimās-i-Zarūrī in *Brāhin*, Vol. I.
5. 'Arz-i-Zurūrī ba Hālat-i-Majbūrī. *Brāhin*, Vol. I.

the publication of the fourth volume there came a long period of gap and the fifth and the last volume appeared in 1905, that is, full twenty-five years after the commencement of the work. In the fifth volume the author mentioned that the publication of the last volume had remained in suspension for twenty-three years. During this period a large number of people who had paid in advance for all the five volumes but had received only four volumes had passed away. Several other people who had paid in advance had expressed their disapproval and resentment at not receiving the promised volume for which the Mirzā apologized in the fifth volume. In this volume he has also mentioned that previously he had in mind to bring forward 300 arguments to prove the truth of Islam, but later he gave up the idea. In the same way, instead of fifty, he would bring out only five volumes. The reason for this change of mind was that the difference between the two figures was merely that of a zero. In his own words :

> "Earlier I had thought of writing 50 volumes, but now I have confined myself to writing five since the difference between the figures fifty and five is just that of one dot (that is zero). Thus the promise has been fulfilled by the publication of five volumes."[6]

In *Sīrat al-Mahdī*, Mirzā Bashīr Ahmad writes :

> "Now that four volumes of *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah* have come out in print, its preface and notes all relate to the time of publication and it contains very little of the original work, that is, not more than a few pages. This can be gauged from the fact that out of the 300 arguments which he had written the *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah* contains only one argument and that too not in a complete form."[7]

Anyone who studies *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah* is bound to be impressed by the author's prolificity, perseverance and diligence. These virtues, at best, could stand him in good stead as a

6. Preface of *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. V, p. 7.
7. *Sīrat al-Mahdī*, Vol. I, p.7.

successful debater and and an able writer on religious polemics with Christians and Arya Samājīs. In this huge work, however, one does not find any worthwhile research. Nor does one find that familiarity with the sources of Christianity, its ancient literature, its doctrines and history, and that grasp of its fundamental concepts as one finds, for example, in the works of Maulānā Rahmatullah Kayrānwī (d. 1309 A.H./1891 A.D.), the author of *Izhār al-Haqq* and *Izālat al-Awhām*. Nor does one find that sweetness and elegance of expression, and that originality and brilliance of argument that one finds in works such as those of Maulānā Muhammad Qāsim Nānawatwī's (d. 1297 A.H./1879 A.D.) *Taqrīr Dilpizīr* and *Hujjat al-Islām*.

Inspirations and Bragging

The reader also frequently encounters in the Mirzā's book references to his Divinely inspired revelations, to miracles and to Divine communications and prophecies, and last but not the least, his boastfulness. All this leaves an unpleasant taste in the mouth and transforms the book which claims to embody a sober academic discussion and a dignified religious debate, into a work of personal bragging—a work in which, again and again, the author stoops to self-advertisement and self-glorification.

The central theme of the book is that Divine inspiration had not ceased and should not cease. This inspiration itself is the most powerful proof of the validity of any claim and the truth of religion and faith. Whoever will follow the Holy Prophet perfectly will be endowed with the external and internal knowledge which had been granted originally to the Prophets, and the person will, therefore, become possessed of sure, categorical knowledge. The intuitive knowledge of such people would resemble the knowledge of the Prophets. It is these people who have been called *Amthāl* in *Hadīth* and *Siddīq* in the Qur°ān. The time of their advent would resemble the time of the advent of the Prophets. It is such people who will establish the truth of Islam and their inspiration will be of a categorical nature.[8]

8. *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. III, p. 231 and 244.

In trying to prove the continuity of this inspiration, he cites his own inspirations and writes :

> "We have several examples of this inspiration before us. But in the one which took place just now at the time of writing these notes in March 1882 it has been revealed as a prophecy that through this book and on becoming informed of its contents, the opponents will ultimately be defeated ; that seekers after Truth will find true guidance ; perversion of belief will be uprooted ; and people will help and turn their attention and come around (me) etc., since God will put this into their hearts and direct them to it... ....."[9]

This has been followed by a more recent lengthy inspiration which is almost an entirely incoherent collection of different Quranic verses. This inspiration embraces about forty lines of the *Barāhīn* and contains about fifty-three or fifty-four Quranic verses, interspersed with a few Traditions of the Prophet. Besides, there are a few sentences by the Mirzā himself which are an example of what might be termed as poor Indianized Arabic. The last lines of the inspiration which contain a comparatively smaller proportion of Quranic verses, read as follows :

> "Live in the world like a stranger or traveller. Become one of the righteous and the truthful. Bid whatever is good and forbid whatever is bad and send your salutations to Muhammad and his progeny. Prayer alone brings man up. Verily I will raise thee towards Myself and I have put love from Me (in the hearts of people). There is no god but Allah. So, write and let it be published and sent to the world. Grasp Unity (of God), Unity (of God), O people of Iran and give glad tidings to those who believed that they have a standing with their Lord. And read out to them what has been revealed to thee from thy Lord. And

9. *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. III, p. 238.

do not swell thy face for the creatures of God and do not get tired of people. The people of *al-Suffah*. And who are the people of *al-Suffah*? Thou shalt see their eyes wet with tears and they will send their salutations to thee. O Lord of ours! We heard a herald calling towards belief, a summon towards Allah, and a bright lamp. Be of hope!"[10]

In the same way, an inspiration has been reproduced in the fourth volume of the same book. This inspiration too is an incoherent conglomeration of Quranic verses and Quranic expressions. It also contains some very obvious errors of Arabic language and grammar (which have been indicated by us by question marks):

"And when it is said to them believe as men believed, they say: Should we believe as they believe who are stupid? Beware! it is they who are stupid, but they know not. and wish that you should compromise with them (?) Say: Un-believers! I worship not that which you worship. It was said to you: turn to God, but you turn not; and it was said to you, subdue your souls, but you subdue them not. Doest thou seek of them any reward that feel burdened (in accepting your message). No, we brought Truth to them (gratuitously) and it is Truth to which they are averse. God is pure and free from whatever they attribute to Him. Do people think that they would be left by merely saying: We believed, and they would not be put to any trial? These people love to be praised for deeds which they have not performed, while nothing is hidden from God and nothing is good which God does not make good and no one can restore him to His favours who has fallen from His grace."[11]

Apart from these revelations in the Arabic language there are two revelations in English as well.[12]

10. *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. III, p. 242.
11. *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. IV, p. 509.
12. *Ibid*, pp. 554 and 556.

Mirzā's beliefs in the Barāhīn

In the four volumes of *Barāhin* (published 1880-1884), the Mirzā expressed merely the view that *ilhām* (Divine inspiration) had not ceased and would not cease, and that the legacy of the Prophets continues in respect of inspired comprehension of things, in respect of the illumination of faith and categorical knowledge. In this book he has also frequently mentioned that he had been commissioned by God to reform the world and spread the message of Islam; that he was *mujaddid* (renovator) for the present age, and that he bore resemblance to Jesus (peace be on on him).[13] In this book he also adheres to the notion of the ascension of Jesus to the heaven and that he would return to the earth. In the appendix to his book, *Nuzūl al-Masīh*, published in 1902, and in volume V of *Barāhin*, which came out in 1905, the Mirzā has admitted that he used to subscribe to the above view and has even expressed his surprise at his having believed in the ascension and return of Jesus.[14] In *Barāhin* he had also strongly rejected the idea of any fresh revelation and of the advent of any new Prophet. The reason for this belief was that the Qur'ān and its teachings were in no danger of being distorted nor was there any danger of Muslims reverting to pre-Islamic ignorance and paganism. On the contrary, he admitted that 'the attitude of the polytheists, owing to contact with the monotheists is gradually tending towards monotheism.' This being the case—that the main dangers which revelation and prophethood seek to avert were no longer real—there was no need for any new *Shari'ah*, or any fresh *ilhām* (inspiration). This also established the termination of prophethood with the advent of the Holy Prophet:

> "Now, since it is rationally impossible and inconceivable that the true teachings of the Glorious *Furqān* will be distorded or changed, or the darkness of polytheism and

13. *Sirat al-Mahdi*, Vol. I, p. 39.
14. Appendix to *Nuzūl al-Masīh*, p. 6. and *Barāhīn* Vol. V. p. 85.

worship of God's creatures would predominate again it is also rationally inconceivable that there should be a new *Sharī'ah*, or the sending down of a new inspiration (*ilhām*). For, that which leads to impossibility is itself also impossible. Thus, it is proved, that the Holy Prophet was in reality the last of the prophets (*Khātim-i-Rusul*)."[15]

Reception of the book

It seems that the book was enthusiastically welcomed in the religious and academic circles of the country. Indeed the publication of this work was very well-timed and the Mirzā as well as his friends publicised it with great zest. The secret of the success of the book seems to lie in the fact that it challenged other religions and instead of apologising on behalf of Islam it took the offensive against them. Noted among those who appreciated and enthusiastically supported this book was Maulānā Muhammad Husain Batālawī. In his magazine *Ishā'at al-Sunnah*, he wrote a long review eulogising the book in six issues of the magazine.[16] In this review the book was lavishly praised and commended as a great academic achievement of the time, a masterpiece of research and authorship. Not much later, the Maulānā felt alarmed at the big claims and 'inspiration' of the Mirzā and, subsequently, became one of his staunch opponents. On the other hand, there were many who were alarmed even by his first book and who began to feel that its author had set himself on a path which would lead him, in the near future, to claim prophethood for himself. Among these far-sighted people were the two sons of the late Maulānā Abdul Qādir Ludhianawi, Maulānā Muhammad and Maulānā Abdul 'Azīz. The *Ahl-i-Hadīth* *'ulama* of Amritsar and some *'ulama* of the Ghaznawī family opposed him from the very beginning and denounced his inspirations as fantasies.[17]

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15. *Barāhīn*, Vol. IV, p. 111 n.
16. Vol. VII, 1884 nos. 6-11.
17. *See Ishā' at al-Sunnah*, June, 1884. Vol. VII, No. 6.

This book brought the Mirzā out of obscurity and put him on the stage of public renown so that countless eyes were turned towards him. In *Sīrat al-Mahdī*, Mirzā Bashīr Ahmad has aptly observed how this book brought the Mirzā to the limelight :

> "Before writing *Barāhīn*, the Promised Messiah spent a life of anonymity and in this isolation his was the life of a *darwīsh*. Before *Barāhīn* he had become known to some extent as a result of his having written a series of articles in some newspapers but all this was very meagre. In fact, it is the announcement of *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah* which, for the first time and for good, placed him before the country and introduced him to those interested in academic and religious matters. The eyes of the people began to turn in amazement, towards this anonymous villager who had promised to write a great book about the truth of Islam in such a challenging manner and with the promise of a huge sum of money as reward (to any one who could refuse his arguments). Thus the sun of guidance which had already appeared on the horizon, now began to rise higher. Later the publication of *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah* created an extraordinary stir in the religious circles of the country. In general, the Muslims welcomed him as a great '*Mujaddid*'. As for the opponents of Islam, this book came to them as a bombshell and created great turbulence in their camp."[18]

The Mirzā himself says the following about his life before the publication of *Barāhīn* :

> "This was the time when nobody knew me; when nobody was either in favour of or opposed to me, for, at that time, I was a non-entity; I was just one among the people, hidden in the corner of anonymity."[19]

He adds :

> "All the people of this town (i.e. Qādiān) and thousands

18. *Sīrat al-Mahdī*, Vol. I, pp. 103-104.
19. *Tatimmah Haqīqat al-Wahy*, pp. 27-28.

of other people are aware that at this period of time I was, in fact, like a dead body which had been buried in the grave for centuries and no one even knew whose grave it was."[20]

Debates with Arya Samājis

In 1886, the Mirzā had a debate with Murlī Dhar of Ārya Samāj in Hoshiarpur. He has written a full-fledged book about this debate, *Surmah-i-Chashm-i-Ārya* (Kohl for the eye of the Ārya). This is the second of his polemics on religions and religious sects.

The topic of the first day's debate was the rational and historical proof of the miracle of cleaving the moon. The Mirzā not only strongly affirmed this miracle but the miracles of other prophets as well. He showed that the occurrence of miracles and super-natural incidents was rationally possible. He took the position that because of the inherent limitations of man's intellect, knowledge and experience, he had no right to deny miracles and thus make the claim to comprehend this vast universe in its entirety. He repeatedly stressed that the knowledge of man was very limited and the range of possibilities very wide[21] (so that the notion that man's knowledge could be comprehensive was untenable). He also stressed that in religious matters faith in the unseen was essential and that this was not in conflict with reason, for the latter could not be all comprehensive in its range. In fact, whatever rational objections the Mirzā pointed out to the belief regarding the ascension of Jesus to the heavens and his descent in future and his stay in the heaven for several centuries and the so-called 'rationalist' trend in his later writings can best be refuted by the arguments that he himself advanced in this book. The personality of the author in this book is quite different from the one in his later writings.

These two books made the Mirzā excessively self-appreciative ; he became aware of his ability as a writer and debater

20. *Ibid*, p. 28.
21. *Surma-i-Chashm-i-Ārya* pp. 557.

and became confident that he was capable of initiating a new movement and influencing his environment. It seems that this discovery proved to be the turning-point in his life. Henceforth, instead of debating with Christians and Ārya Samājis he turned towards Muslims and began to challenge them to debate with him.

2

The Mirza Becomes Messiah

Influence of Nūruddīn

We have seen earlier that when Nūruddīn was in Jammu in connection with his employment the Mirzā was staying in Siālkot, where he was employed in the District Commissioner's office. The two had a number of things in common : both relished religious controversies and debates, and both were ambitious. It seems plausible that each of them was influenced by the other's personality. Hence, correspondence between them began in 1885. In the collection of the Mirzā's letters, the earliest letter to Nūruddīn that we find is dated March 8, 1885. This correspondence continued without break and became so intimate as to include family and matrimonial problems. In January, 1888, the Mirzā undertook a trip to Kashmir in order to meet Nūruddīn and stayed with him for a month. The Mirzā kept Nūruddīn in touch with his inspirations, inspired predictions, and novel pieces of information and research. He even complained to Nūruddīn about the opposition of the *ʿulama* and the alleged view of some of them that he was not a Muslim. In a letter of July 15, 1890 he wrote to Nūruddīn : "And I have heard that these people have begun to call me in hushed tones a kāfir. It was known from this that the Exalted Allah wants to show something great."[1]

Up till then (i.e. 1890), the Mirzā had only claimed, that he was a *mujaddid* and that he had been commissioned by God, and according to Mirzā Bashīr Ahmad, he continued to say that he had been raised to reform the people in the manner of

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1. *Maktūbāt-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. V, p. 79.

the Messiah of Nazareth and that he had a certain resemblance to him.[2] In the *Barāhīn* he expressed the opinion that the absolute predominance of Islam which has been promised in the Quranic verse: 'It is He who has sent His Apostle with Guidance and the Religion of Truth to proclaim it over all religions' would be fulfilled through the Promised Messiah, whose return to the world had been mentioned in the Traditions of the Prophet. As for himself, he merely resembled the Messiah in respect of the first phase of his life, that is, his life on earth. In his own words:

> "This verse ('It is He who has sent His Apostle') is a prophecy which, in the physical and political senses refers to the Messiah; and the promise of complete predominance of the religion of Islam which has been made will be fulfilled through the triumph of the Messiah. And when Hazrat Masih (upon him be peace) will come into this world, Islam will spread all over the world, to all lands. But it has been revealed to this humble one that in view of his poverty and humility, his trust in God and his sacrifice, and in respect of signs and illuminations, he is an examplar of the first phase of the life of Messiah and that the natures of this humble one and of the Messiah are extremely alike as if they were two pieces of the same substance, two fruits of the same tree; and the similarity goes to such an extent that the distinction is very minor."[3]

Nuruddīn's Advice

In the life of the Mirzā as well as in the history of Qādiānism, the year 1891 is very crucial. It is in the beginning of this year that Nūruddīn, in one of his letters, advised the Mirzā to proclaim himself to be the Promised Messiah.[4] We

2. *Sīrat al-Mahdī*, Vol. I, p. 39.
3. *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. IV, p. 495-98.
4. Although in his letter Nūruddīn used the expression Replica of the Messiah, the study of *Fath-i-Islam* and *Izālat al-Awhām* shows that Replica of the Messiah and Promised Messiah were treated as synonymous terms and were used by the Mirzā interchangeably. To cite an instance:

[Continued on next page

have not been able to see this letter of Nūruddīn, but the reply sent by the Mirzā refers to this advice of Nūruddīn. This letter of the Mirzā is included in the collection of his letters and is dated January 24, 1891. This letter reveals the intellectual sources, the behind-the-scene director of the play, the actual author of Qādiānism. The following is an excerpt from this historic letter:

> "It has been said by you, Sir, that there is no harm in proclaiming myself to be the Promised Messiah even independent of the one referred to in the Damascene *Hadith*. This humble one has no need of becoming a replica of the Messiah. I merely want Allah to include me among His humble and obedient servants. But we cannot escape from being put to test. The Exalted Allah has made trial the only way to advancement, as He says: "Do men think they will be left alone on saying 'We believe, that they will not be tested ?'"[5] (xxix, 2)

What were the real motives of this advice? Was it merely Nūruddīn's far-sightedness and ambitious nature, or had it been made on some kind of encouragement from the powers-that-were? It is difficult now to say what actually lay behind the advice. As for the latter possibility, it appears nor far-fetched at all if we bear in mind the historical background of the rise of this new movement. The situation was that the British had witnessed the religious movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and had been put to considerable difficulty owing to that. In more or less the same period of time, there had risen another movement in the Sudan, led by the Sudanese Mahdī, and this too had given the British a very hard time. It is not unlikely that the British should have hit upon the desirability of the rise of a

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"This descent does not mean the real descent of the Messiah, the son of Mary; it is only a figurative expression which, informs the coming of the one like the Messiah which, according to Divine pronouncements and inspirations, is this humble one."

5. *Maktubat-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. V, No. 2, p. 85

feeling of respect for long. For we find him quite soon accepting the suggestion of Nūruddīn—which he had turned down earlier—of proclaiming himself to be 'the Replica of the Messiah.'

If we survey the works of the Mirzā, they can be very easily divided into two phases. The first phase consists of those works in which he seeks merely to prove the validity of Islam and repudiate other religions. In these works there is no claim of being the Messiah. This is followed by the phase when he did make that claim, and went on making several other claims about himself, each more boastful and grandiose than the previous one. The first book that he wrote during this phase is *Fath-i-Islam*, published in 1891, the year which marks a major turning-point in the career of the Mirzā. In this work we find him claiming to be the Replica of the Messiah and the Promised Messiah.[8]

> "If you are honest, then be thankful and make prostrations of gratitude for this is the time for which your noble fore-fathers kept waiting until they passed away, the time which was awaited by innumerable souls who have journeyed (to the next world); for, verily, you have found that time. Now it is for you to value it or not, to benefit from it or not. I shall say this again and shall not cease announcing that I am he who has been sent at the proper time in order to reform people so as to revive religion afresh in their hearts. I have been sent in the same way as the one who was sent after *Kalīm Allāh*.....and whose soul, after great many pains during the rule of Herodius, was raised

7. *See Barahin-i-Ahmadiyah, Surmah-i-Chashm-i-Ārya* and *Shahna-i-Haq*.
8. Mirzā Bashīr Ahmad writes in *Sīrat al-Mahdī*: "The Promised Messiah had written *Fath-i-Islām* towards the end of 1890. This is the first treatise in which he mentioned himself to be the Replica of Messiah and that the Messiah of Nazareth had died. In other words, this was the first proclamation of the claim of being the Promised Messiah." (Vol. I, pp. 267-268). This shows that the author too regards 'Replica of Messiah' and 'Promised Messiah' to be synonymous terms.

to the heavens. So, when the second *Kalim Allāh*, who, indeed, was the first, and the leader of the Prophets, came for the suppression of other Pharaohs, the one concerning whom it has been said: *'We have sent to you (O men) an Apostle, to be a witness concerning you even as we sent an apostle to Pharaoh;* (LXXIII : 15) then he too, who is similar to the first *Kalim* in respect of his work, and yet nobler in rank than he was promised a Replica of the Messiah. And this Replica of the Messiah, having been given the power, nature and characteristics of the Messiah, the son of Mary, descended from the heaven in an age, similar to his age, and around almost the same time that elapsed between the first *Kalim* and Messiah, son of Mary, i. e. in the fourteenth century. And this descent was spiritual in the same way as after having risen; perfect people come down in order to reform people. And he too came down in a period similar in every respect to the period of the descent of the Messiah, the son of Mary, in order that it might remain a sign for those who understand.[9]

Even though this piece of the Mirzā's writing is terribly puzzling and complicated (and perhaps deliberately so), it clearly shows his new claim that he is the 'Replica of the Messiah'; Three of his works, namely *Fath-i-Islām, Tuwdih-i-Marām,* and *Izāla-i-Awhām,* all deal with the same subject and frequently repeat this claim. In *Fath-i-Islām* at another place the Mirzā writes :

So aside from the resemblance with other venerable ancestors bestowed on this humble being, there is also a special resemblance with the nature of Hazrat Masih (upon him be peace) and it is because of this resemblance that this humble one was sent after the name of the Messiah in order to shatter to pieces the crucifixional belief. Hence, I have been sent to shatter the cross and exterminate the pigs. I have come down from the heavens—accompanied

9. *Fath-i-Islām*, pp. 6 and 7.

by angels on my right and left.[10]

In his *Tawdih-i-Marām*, which is his next book after *Fath-i-Islām* he makes this explicit statement :

> With a certain degree of disagreement Muslims and Christians believe that Messiah, the son of Mary was raised from this elemental existence to the heavens and that in some other age he will come down from the heavens. I have written about the error of this notion in my treatise and have also stated that this descent does not mean the actual descent of Messiah, the son of Mary ; it is rather a metaphorical expression informing of the advent of a Replica of the Messiah and which on the basis of information and inspiration from God, applies to this humble one.[11]

Fanciful interpretations

Since Nūruddīn had a wide knowledge of the Traditions from the Prophet he used to draw the attention of the Mirzā towards the difficulties in justifying his claims and also used to help him in solving those difficulties. The problem as to how to relate the attributes which had been mentioned with regard to the Messiah required extraordinary intelligence. Here are a few examples of this intelligence—and of its having run riot.

The Traditions on which the Mirzā based his claim of Messiahship also mention a number of details relating to the descent of the Messiah. One of these is that the Messiah would descend in Damascus. Now, if the Mirzā was the promised Messiah, how could this be justified in the light of the above-mentioned Tradition ? It is obvious that Damascus and Qādiān are far away from one another. Nevertheless, the paradox did not occur to the Mirzā. It is Nūruddīn who drew his attention to it. Let us refer once more to the Mirzā himself on this question :

"This humble one had so far not occupied himself with

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10. *Ibid.*, p. 9 n.
11. *Tawdih-i-Marām*, p. 2.

trying to find out the signification of this (i. e. Damascus), when a friend and trusted lover, Maulavi Hakim Nūruddīn came here to Qādiān and he made a request to turn towards God to reveal the significance of Damascus and the two other ambiguous terms which occur in the Tradition concerned in *Muslim*. Since in those days I was sick and my mind was incapable of strenuous exertion I was unable to attend to these matters. Only a little bit of effort led to the explanation of a word, that is, the reality of Damascus was revealed to me."[12]

Later, he explains his inspired discovery of the meaning of Damascus in these terms:

Thus, it should be clear that in the interpretation of the word 'Damascus' it was revealed to me by God that that town has been called Damascus which is inhabited by a people who have the nature of Yazīd, who follow the practices and ideas of the filthy Yazid, in whose hearts there is no love for God and the Prophet, no veneration for the commandments of God, who have become wont to follow their desires, whose enslavement to the commands of the baser self is such that even the blood of the pure and the sacred appears to them as easy and trifling, who do not believe in the Hereafter and for whom the existence of God is a complicated problem which eludes their understanding. And since the physician should come to the sick, it was essential that the Messiah should appear among such people.[13]

"Thus, 'the descent of the Massiah in Damascus' clearly indicates that there is someone who is a Replica of the Messiah, who also resembles Husain owing to the resemblance between these two venerable personalities (the Messiah and Husain), and who will descend in order to

12. *Izala-i-Awham*, pp. 32-33.
13. *Ibid.* pp. 33-34n..

warn the Yazīdīs for they are akin to the Jews."[14]

Later, he writes "Damascus has been used merely in a metaphorical way."[15] He also adds :

> "Then He told me that these people had the nature of Yazīd and this town (Qāriān) is similar to Damascus. So, the Exalted Allah sent this humble one down to this Damascus for a great purpose (at the eastern side, next to the white minaret of the mosque wherein whosoever entered became safe. Blessed is the One who sent me down at this place).[16]

Two yellow sheets

In interpreting the Traditions which mention certain details of the descent of the Messiah and in applying them to himself, the Mirzā indulges in great extravagance of imagination, puts forward the most far-fetched meanings, and comes forward with the most ridiculous notions—as if he were sure of the absolute gullibility of his readers. For instance, his opponents pointed out that the Traditions on the basis of which he had argued his case and upon which he had based his claim also stated that at the time of his descent the Messiah would be clad in two yellow sheets. Replying to that, he says :

> "I am a permanently sick man. And the two yellow sheets which have been mentioned in the Traditions as those which would be worn by the Messiah when he would come down, these two sheets are with me—and these are, according to the science of interpretation of dreams, two ailments. Hence, one of these sheets is on my upper part so that headache and giddiness and insomnia and palpitation of the heart come to me in the form of fits. The other sheet which is on the lower part of my body is diabetes which has afflicted me for quite a long time so that often I

14. *Ibid* p. 34.
15. *Ibid*., p. 34.
16. *Ibid*., p. 68.

have urinated a hundred times during the night and day, and due to this frequency of urination I am afflicted with all those ailments of debility which generally result from such a disease.'[17]

Eastern minaret of Damascus

Traditions from the Prophet also mention the eastern minaret of Damascus as the place where the Messiah would descend. Instead of interpreting it in some other fanciful manner, as was his wont, what he did in this case was to have a minaret constructed in the eastern part of Qādiān. He made this decision in 1900, according to *Sirat al-Mahdi*, and invited people to donate generously.[18] In 1903, he even laid its foundation.[19] Its completion, however, could not take place during his life-time, and was accomplished by his son Mirzā Bashīruddin Mahmood.

Satire and ridicule

The three above-mentioned works also crudely reveal the Mirzā's bad temper. They are full of satire and ridicule directed against opponents and contain such bitter vituperation that these books can hardly be reckoned among the books befitting the dignity of any serious cause. The style and mode of expression adopted by the Mirzā in these is not even becoming of sober and dignified writers, not to speak of prophets and religious reformers. The manner in which he scoffs at belief in the survival and the return of the Messiah to the earth and at those who subscribe to it reminds one of the type of wit associated with court-jesters rather than with serious intellectuals. Moreover, the kind of debating skill and quibbling which he employs had nothing to do with the prophetic mode

17. Appendices of Arba'in, Nos. 3 and 4, p 4.
18. *See* the announcement regarding the 'Minaret of Messiah', in *Khutbā-i-Ilhāmiyah*, p. 1.
19. *Sirat al-Mahdi*, Vol. II., p. 154.

of expression. While trying to point out the rational impossibility of the Messiah's survival in the heavens, he writes:

"Among others, one objection is that even if we were to assume that the Messiah did reach the heavens, along with his terrestrial body, then it would force us to admit that that body is bound to be affected in the heavens by the effects of time, like all other human and animal bodies and that this passage of time will inescapably and inevitably lead some day to his death. Thus in such a case, it will have to be accepted in respect of the Messiah that after having completed his course of life, he must have expired in the heavens[20] and must have been buried in the graveyard of the inhabitants of some planet (the possibility of habitation on which is being accepted in the present times). And even if we were to assume his being alive, there can be no doubt that he would by now have become a decrepit old man and will hardly be capable of rendering any religious service. Under such circumstances, his coming down to the earth seems hardly of any consequence except an unavailing botheration."[21]

At other place, he makes the following comment on that

20 In the Mirzā's days neither the physical sciences had developed to the present extent nor was man in possession of that extent of empirical knowledge about the outer space and other planets so as to visualise that terrestrial concepts of time and space are not absolute, and that measurements of time and space beyond the gravitational sphere of the earth might be quite different. He, therefore, could neither appreciate the possibility that a thousand years of this world could be equal to just a moment in some other world, or, that there might be a world which is quite different from our own in respect of change, death, feelings, requisites for survival, etc. Man seems to have the inalienable weakness of having blind faith in the knowledge and information of his own time and tends to deny all that has not been known or experienced till that time. In the words of the Qur'ān 'Nay, they charge with falsehood that whose knowledge they cannot compass, even before the elucidation thereof hath reached them.'

(X : 39)

21. *Izāla-i-Awhām*, pp. 25-26.

part of the Tradition which mentions that the Messiah will "kill the swine."

> "Will the excellent task that will be undertaken by the Messiah after he comes down to the earth merely be to go around, accompanied with a pack of hounds, hunting pigs? If this is true, then Sikhs, Chamars and Sansis and Gandils who love pig-hunting have reason to be glad, for they will prosper."[22]

At another place he makes the following observation about the future descent of the Messiah:

> "Watch out lest you are deceived by someone who first boards some balloon and then alights from it in front of you. So, beware! Don't mistake such a person for the son of Mary because of your established belief."[23]

At still another place he refers to the same question in the following manner:

> Brethren, this question stood on two legs:
>
> "(1) One, the descent of the son of Mary from the heavens with his terrestrial body, towards the end of time. This leg has been broken by the Glorious Qur'ān and also some Traditions by informing of the death of the Messiah, son of Mary.
>
> "(2) The second leg was the appearance of the promised Dajjāl towards the end of time. Now this leg has been broken into two pieces by the unanimously agreed Traditions of *Sahih Muslim* and *Sahih Bukhāri* which have been reported by important Companions and also by calling Ibn Sabā to be the promised Dajjāl and, at last, by killing him after making him join the body of Muslims. Now that both the legs of the question have been broken, how and with whose support can this corpse which lacks both the legs stand up after these thirteen countries"?[24]

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22. *Izāla-i-Awhām*; p. 21.
23. *Ibid.*, p 143.
24. *Ibid*, pp. 133-34.

Here is another example of his writing :

"Can it be proved that there has been a consensus regarding the Traditions that the Messiah will go around hunting pigs in woods and that Dajjāl will circumambulate around Kabah and that the son of Mary will perform the obligatory circumambulation of the Kabah like a sick man, supported on the shoulders of two men? Is it not known that the exegetists of these Traditions have been letting their conjectures loose limitlessly?"[25]

At another place, he had the following to address to the *Ahl-i-Sunnah*[26] scholars :

"O respected maulavis! While the death of the Messiah is generally proved by the Noble Qur'ān, certain Companions and Exegetists have, from the very beginning, been continuously killing him (that is, holding that Jesus is dead—*Translator*). Then, why do you adopt your attitude of unavailing stubbornness? Let the God of Christians die. How long will you go on calling him the living one, the undying? Is there any limit to this?"[27]

Impact of Modern Knowledge

The works of the Mirzā written during this period also show that he was deeply impressed with the advancement of natural sciences and with the scientific knowledge which was evoking great interest and curiosity in India in his days. The level of scientific knowledge attained by the West by that time would appear to be rudimentary when judged by the present level of scientific advancement. However, the Mirzā's acquaintance of the then scientific knowledge was second-hand and very superficial. It seems that one of the main props of his rejection

25. *Izāla-i-Awhām*, p. 214.

26. *Lit.* 'One of the path'. A term generally applied to the largest sect of Muslims who belong to one of the four juristic schools of orthodox Islam.

27. *Izāla-i-Awhām*, p. 235.

of the idea of the return of the Messiah was that the idea ran counter to the accepted facts of modern science. He thought that such a belief would expose religion to the ridicule of the educated people. He wrote in *Izāla-i-Awhām* :

> "In this philosophically-minded age, which has speedily brought with it mental refinement and intellectual advancement, it is a big error to think that one would be able to achieve religious success while holding on to this belief.[28] If such baseless things were to spread in the deserts of Africa or among the desert-dwellers of Arabia or in some islands of the sea or among groups of wild people, they might spread easily. But we cannot propagate such teachings which are totally opposed to reason and experience and natural sciences and philosophy and which also cannot be proved (to have originated) from our Prophet (upon him be the salutation and peace of God) ; rather traditions which are quite opposed to these are being proved among the educated people. Nor can we present them to the scholastically inclined people of Europe and America, who are getting rid of the absurdities of their own religion. How can they (whose minds and hearts have been illuminated by the light of new sciences) believe in such things which are out and out an insult to God and constitute an abrogation ofthe principles of His Book ?"[29]
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> While reading passages such as these, one finds it hard to

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28. It is hard to say how and why the Mirzā believed in such metaphysical propositions as revelation, angles, paradise, hell, etc. and how he accepted the demand of religion. Indeed, the very heart of religion is guided by faith in the realities beyond the ken of human perception. The above excerpt only illustrates the extent to which he was mentally over-awed by "modernism", and how he, like other superficial writers and ill-educated people of the nineteenth century, had deified modern science without appreciating its actual domain and its inherent limitations.

29. *Izāla-i-Awhām*, p. 135.

believe that they could have been written by the author of *Surma-i-Chashm-i-Āryā*; by the same writer who had strongly argued in favour of the possibility and actual occurrence of miracles and had refuted the view that metaphysical notions could not be denied on the basis of reason of limited human experience.

In this book the Mirzā has argued on the basis of the *Jummal*[30] numerals and here his mode of argument becomes very close to that of the missionaries of the *Bāṭiniyah* sect who used to employ these numerals as evidential arguments even in respect of fundamental religious beliefs.

"My attention has been drawn through *Kashf*[31] towards the powers of the letters of the following name wherein I have been informed of the Messiah who was to appear at the end of the thirteenth century. (God has told me) that He had already kept in view the era (of Messiah's appearance) in giving this name (to me); and that name is, 'Mirzā 'Ghulām Ahmad Qādiānī'. The powers of the letters of this name add up exactly to 1300, and in this township of Qādiān there is none except this humble one whose name is Ghulām Ahmad. In fact, it has been put in my heart that at this time there is none except this humble one who has the name 'Ghulām Ahmad Qādiānī.' And this has been a favour bestowed by God to this humble one that He, the Pure One, reveals the mysteries to me through the powers of alphabetical letters."[32]

At another place he writes:

"Now it is proved by this research that the Qur'ān contains the prediction of the coming of the Messiah, the son of Mary, towards the end of time. The time of the appearance of the Messiah, which has been fixed by the Qur'ān as 1400 (A.H.) has also been accepted by many saints on the basis

30. The reckoning of the alphabets by a system in which the letters have different powers.

31. Revelation of any secret to a mystic or saint by the grace and power of God.

32. *Izāla-i-Awhām*, p. 90.

of their *kashf*. The Qur'ānic verse 'And We certainly are able to drain it off'[34] has letters which, according to the Jummal, make up the figure of 1274; and this points to the moonless nights of the Islamic lunar months containing a hidden pointer to the rise of a new moon. And this mystery is latent, according to Jummal system, in the letters of Ghulām Ahmad Qādiānī."[35]

In these books, while trying to explain the Traditions from the Holy Prophet and arguing that they referred to him, the Mirzā has been extremely heedless of all rules of exposition of such texts, giving full rein to his fancy. In fact, it is hardly conceivable that anyone should take such liberty in explaining even the writings or compositions of ordinary writers and poets not to say of Traditions from prophets. To suit his purpose the Mirzā has taken the position that the words of the Traditions are of a figurative or metaphorical nature. Again, in this respect, he seems to be following in the footsteps of the Bātinīs who used to explain religious terms—about whose text as well as meaning there is an unbroken continuity of agreement—in a far-fetched and ridiculous manner without any lexicological or rational basis to support them. And it is thus that they had opened the floodgates of atheism and nihilism.

In *Izāla-i-Awhām* the Mirzā repeatedly asserts that knowledge about the son of Mary and Dajjāl had not been completely clear to the Holy Prophet and that in this regard God had endowed him only with some brief hints.[36]

The Messiah in Kashmir

The Mirzā kept on "reflecting" about the death of the

34. It should be noted that this verse refers to rain, and the whole verse reads thus: "And We send down water from the sky according to (due) measure and We cause it to soak in the soil; and We certainly are able to drain it off (with ease). (XL: 18)

35. *Izāla-i-Awhām*, Vol. II, p. 338.

36. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 346.

Messiah till, in the end, he concluded that his death had taken place in Kashmir and that it was there that he lay buried. In this connection, according to his wont, he did a lot of hair-splitting which shows the fertility of his imagination even if the level is childish. He has tried to prove that the pronunciation of Kashmir in Kashmiri language is "*Kāshir*", and it appears that this word, in fact, is a compound Hebrew word, composed of 'K' which is used to denote similarity, resemblance, etc. and of 'Āshīr' which in Hebrew means Syria. Thus the word 'Kāshīr' in Hebrew meant 'like Syria'. On this basis, the Mirzā went on to add that when Jesus (peace be upon him) migrated from Palestine to that part of India which due to the excellence of weather, agreeableness of its seasons and its greenery and freshness had close resemblance to Syria, God named it "Kāshir" in order to comfort and gratify him. The excessive use of the word led to the dropping of 'ā' with the result, that it became 'Kashir.' Then, he proved that the tomb of 'Budhasaf' (popularly known as the "prince") in the Khān Yār locality of Srinagar was in fact the grave of Jesus. In trying to support this piece of research, he marshalled all possible far-fetched arguments, with the result that his writing on the point appears closer to poetry and fiction rather than what is normally considered to be academic writing. The unbridled speculations of the Orientalists, who are noted for making the mountain out of a mole-hill simply pale into insignificance when compared with the Mirzā's writings.[37]

This brings us to a definite milestone in the spiritual experiences and claims of the Mirzā. At this stage he categorically claims to be the "Promised Messiah," and tries to prove this by his so-called 'rational' as well as traditional arguments.

3

From Messiah to Prophet

An objective, but critical study of the Mirzā's writings gives one the impression that his claims proceeded along a gradually ascending scale. All this seems to have been planned very carefully and the Mirzā appears to have exercised great patience and precaution in moving from one stage to the other. In the beginning he expressed the opinion that inspiration, intuitive experience and categorical knowledge were an essential concomitant of completely following the Prophet–a natural stage at which one arrives as a result of losing oneself in obedience to the Prophet. He does not explicitly claim himself to be a prophet, but talks about prophetic attributes and characteristics and tries to prove that these attributes and characteristics are bestowed upon the followers of the Prophet, particularly upon the more perfect ones, by virtue of their following the Prophet. This logic and its premises were bound to lead the Mirzā, sooner or later, to proclaim himself to be a prophet. It appears that throuhgout these years, he remained busy paving the way and trying to create the proper atmosphere for such a proclamation. He seems to have been trying to assess whether the devotion of his followers had reached the stage where they would not mind accepting even this claim, as they had accepted the rest of his claims.

Proclamation of Prophethood

At last that event did take place. In the year 1900, Maḷlavi ʿAbdul Karīm, the preacher of the Friday sermon, gave a sermon in which he used the words *Nabī* (Prophet) and *Rasūl*

(Messenger) for the Mirzā. This caused great irritation to Maulavī Sayyid Muhammad Ahsan Amrohawī. When Maulavī ʿAbdul Karīm came to know of this, he gave another Friday sermon in which he addressed the Mirzā, requesting him to contradict his belief, if he was wrong in considering him to be a prophet and messenger of God. After the Friday prayers were over, Maulavī ʿAbdul Karīm caught hold of the skirt of the Mirzā's apparel and requested him to correct him in his beliefs if they were erroneous. The Mirzā turned around and said that he, too, held the same belief. Meanwhile, Maulavī Muhammad Ahsan had been greatly agitated by the sermon and in anger was pacing the floor of the mosque. On Maulavī ʿAbdul Karīm's return, he began to quarrel with him. When their voices rose very high, the Mirzā came out of his house and recited the Quranic verse: "O ye who believe! Don't raise your voice above the voice of the Prophet."[1]

(XLIX.2)

Thus the sermon of Maulavī ʿAbdul Karīm inaugurated a new phase in the career of the Mirzā. This sermon provided him with the much needed assurance that his followers had such an unquestioning faith in him that they would accept whatever claims he might make. The Mirzā's own son, Bashīruddīn Mahmood has very ably described this development by pointing out that the Mirzā used to claim his self to be invested with the attributes which could be found in none except a prophet and yet he used to deny his being a prophet. When he became conscious of this inconsistency and became aware that these attributes were untenable with his denial of prophethood, he proclaimed himself to be a prophet. He writes:

"In short, since in the beginning the Promised Messiah thought that the definition of *Nabī* is the one who brings a

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1. This event is based on the report of a speech of Sayyid Sarwar Shah Qādiānī at an annual conference held in Qādiān, and published in *al-Fadhl*, Vol. X, No. 51, dated January 4, 1923. *See* also *Haqiqat al-Nubūwat*, p 124.

new *Shari'ah*, or abrogates some injunctions, or is a prophet directly (appointed by God): so, even though all the attributes and qualities required of a prophet were found in him, he used to decline from designating himself a prophet. When, later on, he became aware that the nature of his claims is that of a prophet and not of a *Muhaddath*, he proclaimed himself to be a prophet."[2]

However, whether the Mirzā refrained from proclaiming himself to be a prophet till his misunderstanding was removed and he was commissioned by God to proclaim his prophethood, or he had been waiting all this while for an opportune moment to make this declaration, there is no doubt that he was ultimately led to making the proclamation of his prophethood which was the logical result of his earlier claims.

Elucidation and Challenge

As stated by Mirzā Bashīruddīn Mahmood, the question was finally decided in 1901 and the Mirzā began to write about it explicitly in his writings. The collection of articles called *Arba'īn*[3] is full of declarations and explanations about this new mission. This frankness increased steadily. In 1902 he wrote a treatise entitled *Tuhfat al-Nadwah*, which was addressed to the *'ulama* who were taking part in the deliberations of the Nadwah Conference held at Amritsar in 1902. In this treatise he wrote:

"Thus, as I have repeatedly said, what I recite unto you is categorically and certainly the word of Allah, in the same way as Qur'ān and Torah are the words of Allah, and that I am a *Zilli*[4] and *Buruzi*[5] prophet of God, and every

2. *Haqiqat al-Nubūwat*, Vol. I, p. 124.

3. The Mirza had promised to write forty treatises on the subject but he concluded the series only after the fourth one. *See Arba'īn*, Vol. IV, p. 14.

4. Reception of the revelation through the grace of Muhammad (peace be on him) has been called "*Zilli nubūwah*" by the Mirzā. See *Haqiqat al-Wahy*, p. 28.

5. This kind of prophet, according to the Mirzā does not receive it (i. e.

Continued on next page

Muslim is obliged to obey me in religious matters. And every one who has received information about me, even though he be a Muslim, but does not consider me arbiter in his affairs, nor recognizes me as the Promised Messiah, nor considers my revelations as coming from God, he is liable to punishment in the heavens for he has rejected what he had to accept at its proper time. I do not merely say that I would have courted (the disaster of) death had I been a liar; I also say that I am true even as Moses and Jesus and Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on them) were true, and that God has shown more than ten thousand signs to uphold my claim. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has testified and the earlier prophets had indicated the time of my advent, which is the present time. The Qur'ān has also indicated the time of my debut during the present times. Both the heavens and the earth have borne testimony in my support; nor is there a prophet who has not testified in my favour."[6]

In the same vein is what he wrote in *Haqiqat al-Wahy:*

"So, of all the people of this *ummah*, I am the only one who has received this large portion of Divine revelation and knowledge about the Unseen. None of the saints of this *ummah*, who have preceded me, was given such a big share of this bounty.[7] For this reason I alone was chosen to

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prophethood) for his own self, but for the majesty of his prophet. It is for this reason he claims, that his name in the heavens is Muhammad and Ahmad. This means that the Prophet Muhammad's *nubūwah* was received ultimately by (another) Muhammad. although ina *buruzi* way, and not by any body else". *Ek Ghalti ka Izālah*, p. 5.

6. *Tuhfat al-Nadwah*, p. 4.

7. This is merely a claim, and it is based on lack of religious knowledge and is against historical facts. In the *ummah* of Mohammad (peace be on him) there have been so many saints who have been graced by divine inspiration, but none ever claimed it to be a revelation, nor claimed prophethood on that basis.

be appointed a prophet and none else deserved this title."[8]

All the later writings of the Mirzā are full of similar categorical elucidations of his claim to prophethood. These are too many to be mentioned in this book. All those interested in a more detailed study of it should study his *Haqīqat al-Wahy*, and Bashīruddīn Mahmood's *Haqīqat al-Nubūwat*.

Independent Prophethood

The works of the Mirzā also prove that he believed himself to be an independent prophet and bearer of a *Sharī'ah*. In *Arba'in* he defined the *Sharī'ah*-bearing prophet as one whose revelation contains positive commandments and prohibitions and who makes some regulations even though these commandments and prohibitions might have been embodied in the scripture of some former prophet. According to him a *Sharī'ah*-bearing prophet need not bring an altogether new set of laws. Then he goes on to declare himself to be such an independent *Sharī'ah*–bearing prophet. To cite his own words.

> "Apart from this, you should know what is *Sharī'ah*. Whosoever laid down some commandments and prohibitions through his revelation and framed some regulations for *ummah* becomes the bearer of a *Sharī'ah*. So, even according to this definition, our opponents are blameworthy, for my revelations contain commandments as well as prohibitions. For instance, take the inspiration :
>
> 'Say to the believers to lower down their eyes and guard their hidden places—This is purer for them.' (XXVI.30)
>
> "All this is found in *Barāhīn-i-Ahmadiyah*. It contains commandments as well as prohibitions and the same is the case with my revelations till today : they contain both commandments and prohibitions. And if you say that by *Sharī'ah* is meant that which contains new regulations then this is wrong. The Exalted Allah says : 'And this is in the Books of the earlier Revelations ; the Books of Abraham and

8. *Haqīqat al-Wahy*, p. 391.

Moses;' (LXXXVII, 18-19) which means that the Qurānic teachings are also embodied in Torah.'[9]

The fact that the Mirzā abrogated a number of those important and categorical injunctions of the *Sharī'ah* which have been continuously supported by Muslims also shows that he considered himself to be the bearer of an independent *Sharī'ah* and regarded himself as one entitled to determine what was religiously obligatory or prohibited. One of the examples is the attitude he took in respect of the question of *jihād*. Even though *jihād* is a textual Quranic injunction supported by the unbroken belief and practice of the *ummah* throughout the fourteen centuries of our history and is supported by the Prophetic Tradition: '*jihād* will continue till the Day of Resurrection,' but the Mirzā prohibited it. In connection with the abrogation of *jihād*, just one excerpt from his writings on the subject will suffice:

> "*Jihād*—that is the harshness of religious wars—has gradually been lightened by God. During the time of Moses there was such harshness that even acceptance of belief could not save a man from being killed, and even suckling babies were put to death. Then during the time of our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the killing of the children, the old and women-folk was prohibited. Then, for certain nations, instead of accepting the faith, payment of *jizyah* was accepted as the means of saving them from punishment. Then, in the time of the Promised Messiah, the injunction of *jihad* has been absolutely repealed."[10]

Excommunication of the Deniers of Mirzā's Prophethood:

The natural and logical consequence of the claim to be a

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9. *Arba'in*, appendix 4, p. 7.
10. *Arba'in*, Vol. 4, p. 15n. For more detailed statements of the Mirzā on the subject *see* Section 2 of Chapter III of the book.

prophet was that all those who declined to believe in the new prophethood should be declared unbelievers (*kāfirs*). The Mirzā himself recognized that only a *Sharīʿah*-bearing prophet was entitled to declare all those who did not believe in him to be *kāfirs*. He writes :

> "This point is worth remembering that to call those who reject one's claim as *kāfirs* is worthy only of those prophets who bring from God a *Sharīʿah* and new injunctions. But all others besides the *Sharīʿah*-bearing (prophets), that is, *mulhām* (Divinely-inspired) and *muḥaddāth* (recipients of Divine Communication), no matter how high their station is in the sight of God and no matter how highly honoured they are by God, rejection of their claim does not render anyone an unbeliever."[11]

Nevertheless, all the subsequent works of the Mirzā are replete with denunciations of those who denied his Prophethood as *kāfirs*. A few examples will suffice :

> "During these days the foundation of a new sect will be laid in the heavens and in order to support this sect, God will blow (His trumpet) "Be" and by the sound of this "Be", every fortunate one will be drawn towards it except those who are eternally doomed and have been created to fill up the Hell."[12]

In his inspiration which the Mirzā published on May 25, 1900, he said :

> "I have received inspiration that whosoever will not follow thee and will not enter into thy oath of fealty then such a disobeyer of God and the Prophet will dwell in Hell."[13]

Take another instance: "God had revealed to me that every one who has received my call and has not accepted it is not a

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11. *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*, p. 110n.
12. *Barāhin-i-Ahmadiyah*, Vol. V, pp. 82-83.
13. *Miʿyār al-Akhar*, p. 8 (cited from Qādiānī *Mazhab*).

Muslim.[14]

At another place, the matter has been dealt with in greater detail :

> "*Kufr* denotes two categories (of disbelief): first, that a person denies Islam itself and does not recognize the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) to be the messenger of God. The second (category of) disbelief is, for instance, that he does not believe in the Promised Messiah and considers him false in spite of the matter having been made clear and even though God and the Prophet had emphatically urged that he be recognized as true, and there had been similar emphatic instruction in the books of the earlier prophets. Thus, since he is the denier of the command of God and His Prophet, he is a *kāfir*. And if one were to look at the matter closely, both these categories of *kufr* are basically the same; for, the person who does not accept the command of God and His Prophet despite his having recognized it to be so, he does not believe in God and the Prophet according to the explicit texts of the Qur'ān and the *Hadīth*.[15]

This constitutes an article of the Qādiānī creed. Its former head, Mirzā Bashīruddīn Mahmood writes :

> "All those Muslims who have not been integrated in the oath of fidelity to the Promised Messiah, regardless of whether they had heard his name or not, they are *kāfirs* and outside the fold of Islam."[16]

It is because of this belief that all non-Ahmadis are *kāfirs*, the Islamic legal ordinances in respect of *kāfirs* have been considered by the Qādiānī group to be applicable to those who are outside the fold of their religion. The Qādiānīs have, therefore, been prohibited from having matrimonial relations with Muslims. In one of his speeches, Mirzā Bashīruddīn Mahmood

14. *Zikr al-Hakīm*, No. 2, p. 24, compiled by Dr. Abdul Hakim, quoted from *al-Fadhl* January 15, 1935.

15. *Haqīqat al-Wahy*, pp. 179-80.

16. *Āīna'-i-Sadāqat*, p. 35 (cited from *Qādiānī Mazhab*).

observed: "One of the ordinances of the Promised Messiah, and an important one too is that no Ahmadi may give his daughter in marriage to a non-Ahmadi. This ordinance is mandatory for every Ahmadi."[17] In *Anwār-i-Khilāfat* he remarks: "A person asked him (i.e. Mirzā Ghulām Ahmad Qādiānī) again and again and put forward several pressing difficulties. Nevertheless, he instructed him to keep his daugther at home for all her life, but not to give her in marriage to a non-Ahmadi. When after the Mirzā's death the said person married his daughter to a non-Ahmadī, the first *Khalīfah*, Hakīm Nūruddīn, not only forbade him from acting as an *Imām* of the Ahmadīs but also excommunicated him from the Ahmadī group, and did not accept his repentance during the six years of his *Khilāfāt* despite his repeated apologies and repentance."[18]

Elaborating on the same theme at another place, he goes on to say:

> "The position of non-Ahmadis in relation to us is the same as that fixed for the *ahl-al-kitāb*[19] in relation to a believer by the Wise Qur'ān, which instructs that a believing man may marry an *ahl-al-kitāb* woman, but may not give a believing woman in marriage to an *ahl-al-kitāb*. Likewise, an Ahmadī may bring a non-Ahmadī woman into the fold of his marriage; but an Ahmadī woman, according to the Islamic *Sharī'at*, may not be given in marriage to a non-Ahmadī male. *Huzūr* (the Mirzā) says: There is no harm in accepting a non-Ahmadī woman in marriage, for marriage with *ahl-al-kitāb* women is permitted. Rather, such a marriage is useful, because thus one more person receives true guidance, (but) one should not marry one's daughter to any non-Ahmadī. If you can have (a non-Ahmadī woman), take her. But to give away (an Ahmadī woman in marriage

17. *Barkāt-i-Khilāfat*, Collection of speeches of Mirzā Bashīruddīn Mahmood, p. 15, (cited from *Qādiāni Mazhab*)
18. *Anwār-i-Khilāfat*, pp. 93-94.
19. A follower of one of the revealed religions that is, a Jew or a Christian.

to a non- Ahmadi) is sinful."[20]

In the same way, to pray behind a non-Ahmadi is not permissible. The Mirzā himself wrote:

> "This Divine Message shows that those who declare (the Mirzā to be) *kāfir* and adopt the path of falsification (of the Mirzā) are a doomed people. Hence, they do not deserve that any one of my *jamā'at* (group) pray behind them. Can anybody offer prayers behind someone who is dead? So, keep in mind that, as God has informed me, it is prohibited for you, it is absolutely prohibited for you to pray behind anyone who declares (me to be) *kāfir* or falsifies (me), or is hesitant (to follow me)."[21]

Pursuing this logic, participation in the funeral prayers of the Muslims too has been prohibited for the Qādiānis. According to the Qādiāni mouthpiece *al-Fadhl* 'the Mirzā did not offer prayer at the funeral of his son (late Fadhl Ahmad) because he was a non-Ahmadi."[22] Miān Bashīruddīn Ahmad in a letter published in *al-Fadhl* even goes so far as to say: "I believe that it is not permissible to offer prayers at the funeral of those who pray behind non-Ahmadis, for, such a person, in my view, is not an Ahmadi."[23] He also expressed the view that it is not permitted to offer prayers at the funeral of even a non-Ahmadi infant. The argument was that just as prayers could not be offered at the funeral of a Christian child, even though he was innocent, one could not offer prayers at the funeral of a non-Ahmadi child.[24]

It was in compliance with this injunction, that even though Chowdhry Sir Zafrullah Khān, then Pakistan's Minister for External Affairs, was present at the funeral ceremony of Mr. Jinnah, he did not participate in the funeral prayers.

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20. *al-Hakam*, April 14, 1908 (cited in *Qādiānī Mazhab*
21. *Arba'in*, Vol. III, p. 34n.
22. *Al-Fadhl*, dated 15th December, 1921.
23. *Al-Fadhl*, dated 13th April, 1926.
24. *Al-Fadhl*, Vol. 9, No. 72 and Vol. X, No. 32.

One of the corollaries of accepting this belief is that whatever religious duties one had performed prior to entering into the fold of Qādiānism, would be deemed to be all null and void. In reply to a query raised by a Qādiāni, he was informed: "Whosoever performed his obligatory pilgrimage at the time when his (i. e. the Mirzā's) claim had become well-known and the proof of its validity had been made evident to the people of the country in general, and the Mirzā had interdicted praying behind a non-Ahmadī *Imām*, then that person's *Hajj* will not be reckoned as having been performed by him."[25]

Incarnation and transmigration of soul

Some of the writings of the Mirzā indicate that he also believed in the doctrines of incarnation and transmigration of souls and that the souls and essence of the prophets (upon all of them be the peace of Allah) were embodied in the person of the prophets one after another. In *Tiryāqal-Qulūb* he writes:

> "Thus, as has been accepted by the *Sufis*, the levels of existence are cyclical. In this way, Abraham (upon him be peace) was re-born in respect of nature, temperament and familiarity of heart, two thousand and five hundred years after his death in the house of ʿAbdullah, the son of ʿAbd al-Muttalib and was called by the name of Muhammad."[26]

He also writes:

> "At this place this point needs to be remembered that during the periods of the internal degeneration of Islam, the spirituality of our Prophet (upon him be the peace and benediction of Allah) manifests itself and this incarnation of the essence of Mūhammad shows itself in the form of some perfect follower. As for what has been reported in the Traditions that *al-Mahdī* would be born and that 'his name would be my name and his mode of conduct be (like)

25. *al-Hakam*. (Qādiān) of May 7, 1934.
26. *Tiryāq al-Qulūb*, p. 155 n.

my mode of conduct'—if these Traditions are correct, then the reference is to the descent of his spirit as I have mentioned above."[27]

In another of his works he wrote :

"It has been made known to me through *kashf* that when Jesus was informed about this sacriligiousness which has spread from the Christian people to the whole world, his soul moved for spiritual descent. Thereafter, God, according to His promise, granted him his replica, and in it was infused the Messiah's courage and character and spirituality, and the two—that is, the Messiah and his replica, were firmly integrated as if they were two parts of the same matter. Thus, in this sense, his being became the being of the Messiah, and the yearnings of the Messiah descended into him—and it is the descent of these which, in inspirational terminology, has been described as the descent of the Messiah."[28]

Two advents of the Prophet

The Mirzā also declared that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) has had two advents. He said :

"And know that our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), in the same way as he was sent in the fifth millenium, was also sent towards the end of the sixth millenium, in the form of the Promised Messiah."[29]

He even felt that this second advent was stronger, more perfect, and brighter than the first one :

"Rather the truth is that his spirituality (upon him be peace) at the end of the sixth millenium, that is, in these days, is more vigorous and stronger and more perfect than in those years ; rather, it is like the full moon."[30]

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27. *Āīna-i-Kamālat-i-Islām*, p. 346.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 254-55.
29. *Khutba-i-Ilhāmiya*, p. 180.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

Mirzā's boastfulness

The boastfulness of the Mirzā in respect to his prophethood and his attainments is a noteworthy feature of his life. This reflects a particular kind of psychological complex, and we need not try to analyse it. However, his urge to express his greatness was so pressing that he proclaimed himself to be of the same status as all other prophets. To quote one of his couplets :

He who gave the cup to every prophet,
Gave it to me filled to the brim !

Later, he proclaimed himself to be possessed of the virtues of all prophets. To quote him again :

Although prophets there have been many,
In Divine inspiration I am not less than any.[31]

He, further, went on to claim :

Every prophet became alive when I was raised ;
Every Apostle lies hidden beneath my garment.[32]

Not only this ; he proclaimed that it was he who had brought about the perfection of the human race ; that without him, this garden of humanity was incomplete :

The garden of Adam which had been incomplete so far,
Has now burst into bloom, complete with leaves and fruits.[33]

He also seems to believe that the attainments of prophethood and spirituality evolve with the passage of time so that these attainments had found their most perfect form in his own personality. He wrote :

"In the same way, the spirituality of our Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) appeared in the fifth millenium—and that time was not the apex of its advancement—but the first step towards the highest point of its

31. *Khutba-i-Ilhamiya*, p. 99.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
33. *Barāhin-i-Ahmadiya*, Vol. V, p. 113.

perfection. Then that spirituality radiated itself towards the end of the sixth millenium, that is, during the present time, in the same way as Adam was created towards the end of the sixth day by the command of Allah, the Best Creator. And the spirituality of our Prophet, the best of the prophets, made its manifestation in a member of his *ummah* so that this spirituality might reach the perfection of its manifestation and predominance of its light, as God had promised in his Radiant Book. So, I am that promised manifestation ; I am the promised Light."[34]

In *Ajāz-i-Ahmadī* he even tries to place his miracles and signs above those of the Holy Prophet. He says : For him the moon was cleaved, but for me both the sun and the moon were eclipsed. So, will they still deny ?[35]

These boastful claims of the Mirzā provided sufficient ground for his staunch followers and successors to build further on that foundation, as has always happened in the history of sects and religions. It is no surprise, therefore, that many of his followers explicitly declare him to be superior to most of the prophets. Mirzā Bashīruddīn Mahmood, the son and second successor of the Mirzā, wrote the following :

"Many prophets have passed in the world, but their disciples did not go beyond the stage of *muhadduth*, except for our Prophet (i. e. Muhammad), whose benediction became so effluent that besides many *muhaddath*, one achieved even the status of prophethood. And it is not only that he became a prophet but having attained perfection by way of reflection of the one whom he followed, went even ahead of some of the great prophets."[36]

The enthusiastic followers of Mirzā Bashīruddīn, however, did not stop even at that. The mouthpiece of the movement,

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34. *Khutba-i-Ilhāmiya*, pp. 177-78.
35. *Ajāz-i-Ahmadi*, p. 71.
36. *Haqiqat al-Nubūwat*, p. 257.

al-Fadhl, wrote :

> "The Promised Messiah was a prophet. His position by virtue of his status, was that of the disciple and the reflection of the Noble Messenger (upon him be peace and blessings of Allah). As for other prophets (upon them be peace), he excelled many of them ; may be, he excelled them all."[37]

37. *al-Fadhl*, Vol. XIV, No. 85, dated April 29, 1927 (cited in *Qādiāni Mazhab*).

PART III

Some Aspects of Life and Character

1

Mirza's Life after the Spread of his Message

Early Life

Mirzā Ghulam Ahmad had started his life in poverty. In the early part of his life the situation was that a big part of his landed property had already gone and there was no other means of income. In his own words, he was concerned only with the dinning table and the bread."[1] Prior to the spread of his fame he had spent twenty five years of anonymity. To cite own words again: "In fact during this period I was like a dead body, buried for centuries in such a manner that it was not even known whose grave it was."[2] This state of affairs lasted until the appearance of the Mirzā as an author and champion of Islam. Then, his fame spread as a preacher and spiritual leader. He claimed to be the "Promised Messiah", and, subsequently, an independent messenger of God. In this phase, things changed for him. We see him from now on as the spiritual guide and leader of a nascent religious community and a prosperous group of people. Gifts poured in from all sides and he became the centre of adoration and love of thousands of people. It is obvious that the Mirzā's prosperity in this period of his life owed itself to his religious movement. It is religious sentiment alone which led the people to make sacrifices in order to help the Mirzā financially. The student is bound to feel curious as to

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1. *Nuzūl-al-Masih*, 1st Edition, p. 118.
2. *Tatimmah Haqiqat al-Wahy*, p. 28.